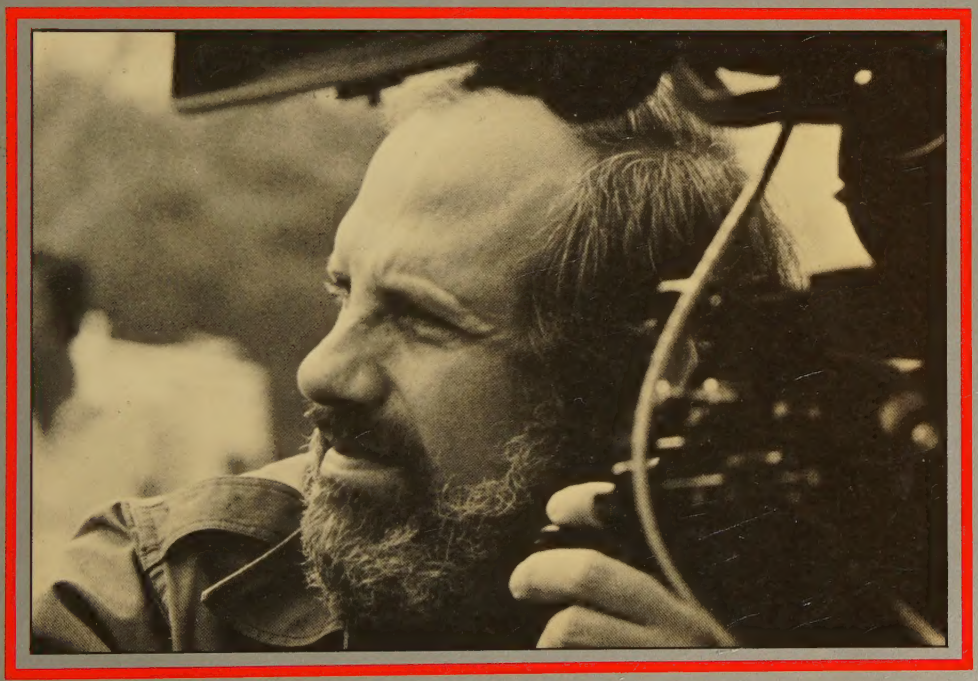
An exclusive on-the-set profile of the controversial director of CARRIE, DRESSED TO KILL, BLOW OUT, and BODY DOUBLE

DOUBLE DE PALMA



A Film Study with Brian De Palma

by Susan Dworkin

Author of MAKING TOOTSIE

DOUBLE DE PALMA

Also by Susan Dworkin from Newmarket Press

Making Tootsie: A Film Study with Dustin Hoffman & Sydney Pollack

DOUBLE DE PALMA

A Film Study with Brian De Palma

Susan Dworkin

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Author's Note

The material for this book was collected during the better part of March 1984, on the *Body Double* set in California, and subsequently in New York during the editing process. *Body Double* was scheduled for release at the end of October 1984 and changes—including some reshooting—were still being made in August. This manuscript was completed in July 1984. I am grateful to all those who allowed me to interview them and who so patiently explained their craft and their feelings. Thanks are due to my publisher Esther Margolis and editor Katherine Heintzelman, as well as to Jamie Jensen and Suzanne Goldstein who transcribed so much tape so painstakingly. And I owe a special debt to Howard Gottfried and Mike Seeman, whose friendliness and generous help immeasurably simplified my task.

This book is dedicated to my mother.

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ONE

THE GLARE

"It's a good script. It's not gonna save the world. I mean, it doesn't have eighty-five messages pasted on it. But it shows a side of Los Angeles, and it's gonna be entertaining."

Joe Napolitano, First Assistant Director, *Body Double*

In March 1984, dirty thoughts hung quite literally over Los Angeles. Across the broad, hazy sky stretched billboards in Panavision proportions featuring naked or nearly naked people, all perfect. They invited you to spend the weekend. They bandied the latest movies. *Blame It On Rio*, butt first. Rachel Ward, her blouse coming down, her skirt sliding up, as Jeff Bridges reached for her with open mouth and bulging biceps. Even the upcoming Olympics were billed sexily. Carl Lewis's beautiful body leaped off the sign on the way to the airport.

There was sweat in the cleavage of the girl in the pink aerobics outfit, hawking calorieless soft drinks above La Cienega.

The display of bodies on the horizon imposed its standards on the bodies in the street, where unprecedented masses of plain people were apparently consumed with the cultivation of fleshly perfection. There was this general feeling of continual coitus; mega-flesh above pressing on real flesh below.

Those who were not in on the act recognized each other immediately.

Across the street from Kathy Gallagher's and Joe Allen's, lively restaurants for the up-and-coming, there was a men's gym with a see-through facade, so while you waited for a table, you could watch the beautiful boys sweat and pulse. In a comic book store on Sweetzer, full of little kids trading and collecting, buttons were sold that said "I'd Like To Sit on Your Head" and "A Hard Man Is Good To Find."

Nobody paid any attention.

The style of that particular March tended to make young people look like they had been tortured with electric probes. Hair stuck out in pinnacles. Earrings hung down to the shoulder, appearing heavy (but they weren't: balsa and plastic) and suggesting that the wearer really believed there was no gain without pain. Fingernails were wrapped in acrylic, hard as claws, bright as bullets. Something called "post-Holocaust" fashion was coming into vogue. Headbands wrapped helter-skelter like makeshift bandages over ragtag hair. Gloves without fingers. Rag shoes. Rag skirts. Torn shirts. It was said to be a Japanese design influence, recalling Hiroshima. It was the look of the walking dead and very chic.

Compared to the electrocuted youths with their scarlet-tipped hair, the inflooding Asian middle classes looked like they were spending their money on real estate and would inherit what was left of the earth, for sure for sure. If you took it seriously at

all—the lithe young girls so invested in the thrust of their nipples, the smooth young boys so overdeveloped in the chest that holding them tenderly seemed unimaginable—if you took it seriously at all, you might imagine you were witnessing the waning days of a dying race and mentally play the soundtrack of *Blade Runner,* the Ridley Scott film that took place in Los Angeles far in the future, after The End.

But nobody took it seriously.

Nobody paid any attention.

Blade Runner may have been right on target, its Vangelis score eerily accurate, but the picture didn't make money.

In the small hours of the morning, once-perfect woman beat the future into submission with crushing regimens of exercise. Teachers came to them before dawn; lift push strain lift push jump faster faster, they said. And the beautiful movie stars now assailing fifty had the thin strong bodies of pubescent tomboys again. Their breasts got small and tight again. Their inner thighs disappeared. Their faces they renewed with by-now-common surgery. They took fistfuls of vitamins.

Oddly enough, there was a certain fear among certain men of being left suddenly by a fifty-year-old woman who was now just as beautiful as she had ever been. It was the Stella Adlerization of Hollywood, and it helped encourage some of the older guys in the business to appreciate their wives. Who else would not lie to them? Who else would not fawn on them? Who else would warn them before they made themselves ridiculous? When you're afraid of your next heart attack and you're afraid of the young men coming up who still have their souls to lose, when the deal is everything, *when the deal is your life* and you're afraid of death, then who can think about sex anyway? In Beverly Hills and glittering Malibu, more people slept alone than the randy masses might have imagined.

But nobody paid any attention.

While the film director Brian De Palma was shooting his new sex-and-murder suspense thriller, *Body Double,* some personnel at a respected nursery school in Manhattan Beach were revealed to be sexually abusing the little kids, threatening them with the death of their parents if they should speak up, killing small animals in front of them so they would understand what death means. Two hundred thousand cases of child abuse were reported annually. The unreported could only be guessed at.

Fatalities from cocaine abuse had increased, according to Los Angeles TV, by 132 percent. "When cocaine becomes your lover," one cured user said, "you don't need a man." The number of perfect Hollywood people who had made a similar exchange could only be guessed at. Why? Where they tired of sex?

Brian De Palma said no, impossible. He sat in the shady Farmer's Market, drinking mocha espresso, and said people would never get tired of sex.

But why are there all these sex substitutes, Brian? Brutalizing babies. Turning off with drugs. Turning on with exercise. Maybe our appetite for sex is being used up, like the timber of the West, like the West itself, because of overexposure to endless fuck films and the availability with all these new VCRs to copy them and keep them at home, where someday they might be found on a shelf rather dusty, like old baseball cards; something Dad played with when he was young.

Never, Brian says. Home video hardcore sales are enormous. He spoons the whipped cream off the top of his coffee and grins. He has spaces between his teeth. His grin can be carnivorous.

No no, wait a minute, Brian, don't reject this idea out of hand, think of it in economic terms, in terms of capitalism like you always do! Maybe we're in the great surfeit before the end!

You want another coffee?

Maybe this is how the world ends, Brian! With a certain glare!

De Palma laughs and shakes his large gray shaggy head. It is definitely not his problem if the world is ending. He's making a movie. That's what he cares about. He cares about the glare.

He surveys the atmosphere of Hollywood like a large, lumbering submarine just above the surface. He pans. He scans. Never diving, never going too deep. Remember, this is a movie, we don't want to get so deep that we lose the glare.

So he captures the harsh light. He nails the sun-bright colors. He gets the style, the electric style.

He finds the right house for his heroine: curvaceous.

He finds the right house for his villain: phallic.

He paints the disco lights and the tacky actors out of work and the glitzy hills.

He paints Craig Wasson into *Body Double* because he's so cute and lovable; likewise Melanie Griffith; paints in Deborah Shelton because she's so sultry and Gregg Henry because he's so smooth and pleasant. But not for one minute does Brian De Palma paint himself into the picture.

No, Brian is on the outside looking in; that's his stance and his Hollywood persona. He gets to be gray-bearded, balding, overweight, and avuncular to his young actors. He gets to eat large satisfying meals with salt and cholesterol while his actors forbid themselves the merest sliver of cheese. He gets to think about politics, laughing about the primaries. "Super Tuesday! Ha! In three weeks, if you say Super Tuesday, nobody will know what that means!" And of course he gets to be right.

He pans the general feeling of continual coitus in L.A. without being moved by it, friendly as de Tocqueville profiling the Americans, cold as Dr. Teller building their bomb.

He gets to be private about his private life.

He gets to be unrecognizable in public.

He gets to be nice.
And everybody else gets to be perfect.
That's power in Hollywood.
To that, people pay attention.

At forty-four, Brian De Palma was the most celebrated maker of suspense-and-pursuit movies in America. *Carrie* (1976), which launched Sissy Spacek and John Travolta and relaunched Piper Laurie, was by now a classic teenage splatter film, bringing Satanism to new aesthetic heights. *Carrie* was based on a novel by Stephen King and concerned a rejected adolescent girl who takes revenge on her high school tormentors one night by killing them all, the bad and the good together, with her telekinetic powers. *Dressed to Kill* (1980) was about a psychopathic transvestite psychiatrist, played by Michael Caine, who slashes a female patient to death after she confesses her infidelities, and then goes after the call girl who is involved in trying to solve the murder. Angie Dickinson played the unlucky and unfaithful wife; Nancy Allen, then married to De Palma, played the call girl. *Dressed to Kill* established De Palma as the king of cinematic terror. Even on network television, with commercial breaks and its bloodiest scenes cut out, the film could leave a late-night viewer sleepless.

Sisters (1973), *Phantom of the Paradise* (1974), and *The Fury* (1978) were less successful commercially but no less memorable to those who dared to see them. One did not easily forget *The Fury*'s young Amy Irving blowing John Cassavetes to pieces with her eyes.

Sometimes De Palma departed from the generic suspense themes he had become famous for and tried something else. *Obsession* (1976) explored the anatomy of capitalism and greed. The businessman hero (Cliff Robertson) fails to ransom his wife

and young daughter from their kidnappers and they die. He spends the rest of his life building monuments to his guilt, looking for his dead wife. When he "finds" her, she turns out to be his daughter. Written by Paul Schrader, the script of *Obsession* was rather more articulate than De Palma usually wanted.

In 1981, with *Blow Out*, De Palma tried politics.

The story of a sound man (John Travolta) who accidentally tapes a political scandal and tries to save the girl (Nancy Allen) who is involved, *Blow Out* borrowed its essence from the tragedy at Chappaquiddick. It was a very good movie but it didn't make money. However, it did bring De Palma a new level of critical acclaim. By this time, Pauline Kael, the prestigious film critic at the *New Yorker*, thought he was a visual genius.

This made Kael one of the very few grown-up women who were crazy about De Palma.

Because of the recent victories of organized feminism, American women were on the verge of having a better life, more respect, more money, and more power than ever before in history. They were afraid that guys like De Palma—making movies like *Dressed to Kill*—would blow it for them, and Brian was accused of spearing women with the glitz of his artful camera much as Henry Miller (as Kate Millett pointed out in *Sexual Politics*) refined misogyny with his brilliant prose.

Immediately before *Body Double*, Brian had directed *Scarface*, a remake of a Howard Hughes gangster saga. The new version was reset in Miami, and starred Al Pacino as a Cuban cocaine dealer who meets a bloody end at the hands of his competition. Some people liked *Scarface* (Roger Ebert of the Chicago *Sun-Times*; Vincent Canby of the New York *Times*) and some people hated it (Rex Reed of the New York *Post*). But most agreed it

was a very violent picture, and the film ratings board even went so far as to originally give it an X.

Brian recut the movie.

He took out the scene in which the severed arm is hanging from the shower rod, and after a big battle, *Scarface* got an R.

The net result of the controversy was to bring De Palma enormous publicity, to link his name as closely with blood and gore as Charles Manson's, and to make him acceptable to no less a journalist than Ted Koppel as an expert witness during a "Nightline" show about the escalating carnage in our society.

Scarface was different from other De Palma movies. Heavy on script and message (the writer was Oliver Stone), heavy on character (Al Pacino does not kid around), not in the least ironical as De Palma likes to be almost always, the movie was originally slated to be directed by Sidney Lumet. The man who controlled it was its producer, Martin Bregman. Lumet left the project because, in Bregman's words, "he wanted to make one kind of movie and I wanted to make another." Bregman thought he could get the movie he wanted from De Palma. Enrique Fernandez wrote in the *Village Voice*: "When Bregman, the film's true auteur, who conceived, engineered, and commandeered the project as a vehicle for Pacino, changed directors from Lumet to De Palma, he was consciously exchanging depth for flash."

Such a critique pointed up the dilemma of a man attempting to broaden his artistic range.

De Palma had succeeded at "flash" with his suspense movies. When he tried to succeed at depth, in *Blow Out*, the public would have none of it. When he tried again, he was hired for his flash.

So in the wake of *Scarface*, Brian De Palma was a very famous movie director who couldn't quite do what he wanted to

do, still, because what he wanted to do didn't always make money.

Artistically, De Palma could be placed as one of the "Whiz Kids," a group of five directors who constituted a central generation in American auteur filmmaking. Steven Spielberg, Francis Ford Coppola, George Lucas, Martin Scorsese, and De Palma were all friends, connected by old encounters. It was Brian who had discovered Robert De Niro, casting him in one of his earliest pre-Hollywood pictures—*The Wedding Party* (1968)—and introducing him to Martin Scorsese, with whom De Niro developed into one of our nation's finest actors. The Whiz Kids were American spinoffs of the European nouvelle vague of the early 1960s. They had been raised on the notion that the real auteur of a good movie had to be the director. It was originally François Truffaut's idea, put forth when he was still a film critic and not yet a director himself. The idea was that a director could take a genre movie—gangster, adventure, science fiction, suspense, children's, splatter—and so imbue it with his vision and technique that it would rise above the genre into the sphere of art. Central to the auteur concept was a need for immortality that movie making rarely afforded. "The playwright," wrote Erwin Panofsky, "writes in the fond hope that his work . . . will be presented in hundreds of performances that are but transient variations on a work that is constant." How could a director of films achieve the same high? By making the "constant work" not the movie but the genre; by making each of his movies a variation on the genre. If he were really great at his work, he might one day own the genre and his name would be on its inhabitants, like an ethnic origin.

Spielberg's kids.

Coppola's families.

Lucas's adventurers.

Scorsese's losers.

De Palma's voyeurs. De Palma's murderers. De Palma's victims.

As the generation matured, each of its members took hold of the stuff that obsessed him most and made it into his material. Their mutual roots separated through the natural pulls of artistic individuality, and after a while it was hard to see what they had in common except a happy appetite for cinematic reference. In *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, for example, Harrison Ford did a takeoff on Clara Bow's famous "It hurts here" scene. In *Sisters*, De Palma painted the hallways of the protagonists' apartment building womb-red as Bergman had done in *Cries and Whispers*, to make sure we knew we were in a landscape of female crisis. In *Body Double*, the audience would discover references to *Tootsie* in the audition scene, and, in the masturbation sequence, a broadside parody of *Being There*. ("I like to watch," says Peter Sellers, and soon Shirley Maclaine is writhing autoerotically at his feet. "I like to watch," says Jake Scully in *Body Double*; this time, he's delivering a line in a pornographic movie.) And if you didn't get the reference, it didn't matter any more than it really mattered if you had read Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* before seeing Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*.

Brian De Palma said repeatedly throughout his career that he thought of Alfred Hitchcock as a grammarian—that the cinematic vocabulary of Hitchcock's suspense movies was to him a basic guide in the nuts and bolts of visual story telling. He was inspired by Hitchcock the way Ingmar Bergman was inspired by August Strindberg, the drinker to the fountain.

The difference is that we all remember Hitchcock and almost nobody remembers Strindberg. So Bergman's fixation is interpreted as an effete hang-up if it is noticed at all, and Brian's fixation is interpreted as a rip-off. "Saturday Night Live" once did a memorable take-off on De Palma in the form of a trailer

for a movie called *The Clams*. "Once a year," said an oozing announcer voice-over, "Brian De Palma picks the bones of a dead director and gives his wife a job." In addition, we all like Hitchcock (well, maybe not all of us), but only a few of us like Strindberg and only a very, very few of us feel even friendly toward *The Dream Play*, Strindberg's most inscrutable work. In 1934, Bergman saw Olaf Molander's production of *The Dream Play*. He called it his "fundamental dramatic experience." Fifty years later, he gave *Fanny and Alexander* to the world as a celebration of his inspiration by *The Dream Play*.

When Brian was a freshman at Columbia University in 1958, he saw Hitchcock's *Vertigo*. He would probably not stop drinking from that fountain until it was absolutely dry.

Brian's teacher during these impressionable years was Wilford Leach, a theatrical director who later became famous for his hilarious and sophisticated restaging of *The Pirates of Penzance*. Leach was teaching drama at Sarah Lawrence when Brian was attending Columbia, and he went over to Columbia to look for men to be in his plays at the then all-girl school. He saw this young man walking down a path and noticed his brilliant smile and electrifying teeth. I don't want to be in plays, said the young man. I want to make movies. Okay, we'll put movies in the plays, said Leach.

Brian became his student and went on to do graduate work with Leach at Sarah Lawrence.

"It's funny," recalled the gentlemanly, Southern Leach, "I never thought of Brian as a student. We were all young. One of the things that draws people to the theater when they're young is the sense of community, and that's what we had in our little group." The group included Jared Martin, whose marriage was the basis for *The Wedding Party*, and Bill Finley. They were Brian's roommates. Finley would appear as a psychic who tracks Amy Irving in *The Fury* and as the rock composer

Winslow Leach in *Phantom of the Paradise*, seeking diabolical vengeance on the man who has ripped off his music. The group also included the late Cynthia Munroe, who produced *The Wedding Party* and left it to Wilford Leach in her will.

"I thought that Brian was very smart," Leach said. "He had a natural feel for the dramatic. He was preoccupied with his movies, day and night, very interested in the structural and architectural elements of the dramatic form." Brian wrote a couple of plays as he went on to do graduate work at Sarah Lawrence. One was about a knight so encapsulated in his armor that he couldn't get any of his feelings out. Another was about a wooden Pinocchio-type character. "People would get upset at these plays," Leach recalled. "They would say: Only violent and brutal things get through to Brian's characters! These characters have no feeling! *He* has no feeling! His characters are always invulnerable! But I thought he was so gifted, and when a committee from Sarah Lawrence came to see his plays and was outraged, I remember having quite a terrible argument and defending him. My experience was that he was a very warm, generous, entertaining person—but thematically, he wrote about inhumanity."

At Sarah Lawrence, in the mid-sixties, Brian made his earliest movies: *Woton's Wake*, *The Wedding Party*; later on he would make *Murder à la Mod*, and a film of the play *Dionysus in '69*. Leach laughed, remembering the enthusiasms of the young filmmaker. "People would come running and say 'Oh, God, Brian's got the chocolate syrup again and he's pouring it all over the girls!' "

"I can still tell Brian's work in a minute," Leach said with enormous affection. "His work is the work of a rational, thoughtful, intellectual person who stands outside things—and who, in fact, is the opposite of that, whose passions run deep, whose sense of outrage is limitless. He is his own opposite, if you will."

Like the Siamese twins in *Sisters*, one laughing and generous, one murderous, Brian De Palma had a double. "He is . . . his contradictions," Leach said. The movies were an aspect of the man. But the man was living in a time, not a vacuum; and he was in a business, under pressures that no amount of armor could entirely withstand.

The story of *Body Double* was Brian's; he had put the original script together with Robert Avrech, a New York–based screenwriter. It was the story of Jake Scully (played by Craig Wasson), a sporadically working actor in Los Angeles.

Jake is playing a vampire in a horror movie. When the grave closes over him, he freaks, the victim of immobilizing claustrophobia. So he is fired by the director (played by Dennis Franz, often seen in De Palma supporting roles). He goes home to his girl friend and finds her in bed with another man. Since it is her apartment, he moves out. Rejected. Miserable. Lonely.

He is spotted at various actors' haunts and auditions by Sam Bouchard (played by Gregg Henry). Sam sees that Jake is rejected, miserable, and lonely. He "saves" Jake from the psychic probing of an acting teacher who is trying to exorcise the claustrophobia. He buys Jake a drink. Jake is still distressed by the fact that his treacherous girl friend's face was "glowing" when she was making love with that other guy. Laughing, Sam allows that in all his years with women, he's *never* been able to elicit a glow, and that gets Jake laughing, and now they are friends. Sam takes Jake off to a fabulous house that looks like an airport observation tower in the Hollywood Hills. Sam says this is the house of his friend and that he is supposed to watch it while the friend is out of town and make sure that the plants don't die.

The trouble is that Sam now has to go out of town, because he's gotten a part in *Private Lives* onstage in Seattle.

Since Jake is homeless and Sam has to leave, would Jake like to house-sit while Sam is away? Of course Jake would. Has he got someplace nicer to live? Besides, there is a telescope in this house, and if Jake looks through it, he can see a beautiful woman with long dark hair at the window of her curvaceous house across the canyon, masturbating. Every night.

So Sam leaves. And Jake watches.

This masturbation routine is the sexiest thing Jake has ever seen. The woman must be rich—her house says so. She must be lonely—why else would she be getting herself off? Being an innocent, Jake finds nothing unusual in the fact that the lady wears her jewels like a G-string and her high heels in bed. Her husband (not clearly visible to Jake) comes home and beats her up and takes cash out of her safe. She is in deep trouble, sobbing on her luxurious bedding. Meanwhile, Jake has noticed that someone else is watching the woman: an American Indian with an unpleasant face and dark glasses. The Indian starts to follow her. Jake starts to follow her, partly because of his own attraction to her and partly to warn her about the Indian. He follows her when she goes to buy underwear in the Rodeo Collection. She throws her old underwear away. Jake retrieves it from the trash and stuffs it in his pocket.

Jake follows the woman to a beachside motel where she expects to meet her lover. The lover stands her up. She is alone once more, walking toward the water. Suddenly Jake sees the Indian again.

He rushes to warn the woman (played by Deborah Shelton). Someone is following you, he says. I know, she says. No, it's not me, Jake answers. An Indian.

Then the Indian steals her pocketbook.

Jake chases the Indian and the pocketbook across the beach

into a tunnel. He is overcome by his immobilizing claustrophobia. The Indian taunts him, takes the plastic card that will unlock the woman's house from her pocketbook, and, whooping triumphantly, races off. The woman helps Jake out of the tunnel. Her name is Gloria Revelle.

They are so drawn to each other that they almost make love right there at the tunnel—but Gloria stops this madness with this crazy stranger just in time and runs away.

Jake goes back to the observation-tower house. Through the telescope, he sees Gloria with a policeman on the first floor. The policeman leaves, just as Jake notices that the Indian has been hiding on the second floor, robbing the safe with the help of a large electric drill. Before Jake can react, the Indian turns the drill on Gloria.

Jake runs outside, accosts two joggers, hollering "Someone's being murdered in that house!", and speeds off to save Gloria. Meanwhile, she is sort of trying to defend herself against the Indian with the drill. Jake and the joggers burst into the house; Gloria's husband's loyal dog attacks Jake and slows him up. But he and the joggers were too late anyway. The electric drill bores through the ceiling above them, spattering Gloria's blood as it comes, after one of the goriest, most suggestively filmed murders in cinematic history. The Indian gets away.

The police arrive. Detective McLean (played by Guy Boyd) accuses Jake of being a sex deviant and the top-slotted suspect in the murder. He finds Gloria's old underwear in Jake's pocket. Jake says no, it wasn't me, it was the Indian, I tried to save her. Gloria's body is carried out of the house in a black plastic bag. Remind me never to put my life in your hands, McLean says to Jake.

The guilt-ridden Jake returns to his observation-tower house and drinks himself into a stupor and watches television. On a late-night cable show he sees an adult movie queen being

interviewed, and then sees some clips of the video films she is purveying. In one of them a sex kitten named Holly Body (played by Melanie Griffith) is doing a masturbation routine that Jake Scully finds oddly familiar.

He rushes over to Tower Video and rents Holly Body's film. He is stunned. How is it possible that the punky blonde Holly should be masturbating in precisely the same manner as the now-drilled-to-death dark-haired Gloria? Only Holly herself can solve this mystery.

In order to meet Holly, Jake auditions for a sex movie and is quickly cast. Soon he is on camera with Holly herself, and they are making love with lots of feeling because Jake is thinking of Gloria. Eager to know Holly even better, Jake pretends to be a potential film producer and takes her out for a drink, impressing her with how rich he is and how well connected, telling her what a wonderful actress she is and what a beautiful smile she has. Holly sets forth her conditions of employment; Jake accepts; Holly doesn't quite believe all this but he seems so innocent, so nice and he has such adorable blue eyes that she bites. They shake hands on their adult film deal and go home to make love some more.

Now Jake tells her that he's not really a porn producer, he really wants to find out how she got involved in the murder that was committed over there (through the telescope) at that curvaceous house across the canyon. Holly owns up that she did her masturbation routine for some guy who gave her a long dark wig and paid her well but she doesn't know anything about any murder and now she's finished with Jake and his big stories and off she goes, down the endless steps from the towering house, in a great huff. She clomps out on Mulholland Drive in her six-inch heels and tries to hitch a ride.

She doesn't have much luck. A lot of cars pass, leaving Holly increasingly frustrated and upset. When two cars race past her,

drag racing, there is a terrible crash and a fatal accident, with cops and firemen and horrified bystanders. Holly is beside herself. A truck stops. It is driven by a very sinister-looking Indian. Holly gets in.

Meanwhile, Jake, who thinks he has figured out the solution to Gloria's murder, calls Detective McLean. McLean tells him to come on down to the station. Jake tries but gets stuck in the crowd around the accident and sees the Indian bop Holly over the head with a lead pipe. The Indian drives off with Holly. Abandoning his car, Jake gives chase.

Jake finds Holly and the Indian in the woods by a tumultuously cascading aqueduct. The Indian is digging a grave, in which he places the unconscious Holly. Jake sneaks up to the truck but the dog inside sees him and starts barking. Jake and the Indian have a big fight in the grave, during which time the Indian's face starts to come off. However, the Indian wins the fight and decides to bury Jake alive with Holly.

Will his immobilizing claustrophobia get Jake this time too?

The vampire movie fiasco comes back to Jake. He knows that to survive he must rise up out of the grave and act his role, and he does, grabbing the shovel and attacking the Indian. The dog attacks Jake. Jake ducks. Both the dog and the Indian, who now has been revealed to be merely a made-up Indian and really Sam Bouchard who is really Alex Revelle, Gloria's murderous husband, plunge into the aqueduct and drown.

Holly pops out of the grave, and Jake tries to explain what happened. Holly accuses him of being a necrophiliac. Suddenly the vampire is back in business, biting a girl in a shower, so we know that Jake is now back in business too. The girl in the shower is a body double for the original girl in the shower.

Final credits on the vampire movie.

End of *Body Double*.

"I had the advantage of being brought up in a sort of

technocratic household,'' Brian De Palma said pleasantly. ''So I never had any of those fears, those phantoms, about the elitism of what I was doing. When you write, you're following a tradition of great writing. Is it as good as Kafka? Is it as good as Shakespeare? I never sensed there was any tradition in my field. I was just making a movie. It wasn't Shakespeare, it was a movie! If it was good, that was great. If it wasn't so good, on to the next one.''

He grinned his large grin. It was just a movie, and he was going to shoot the beach scene on Monday, and he was just fine.

Body Double, simultaneously full of suspense, gore, sex, and great fun, owed a lot to *Rear Window* and *Psycho* and, most of all, to *Vertigo*. Jimmy Stewart, a detective who has lost his job because of immobilizing *acro*phobia, is retained by a ''friend'' to follow the friend's wife. The wife is played by Kim Novak. She is set up as an utterly gorgeous sex object for Jimmy Stewart to worship. When she ''dies'' because Stewart has been unable to save her, he has a breakdown. Then he sees her again, as a different woman, with a different persona, and he courts her, and little by little, reshapes her in the image of his lost love.

In fact, the ''friend'' had hired Novak to impersonate his wife and entrap the voyeuristic Stewart as a witness, so he could kill his real wife and get away with it. But Stewart doesn't know this. He insists that Novak adopt the hair style of her ''dead'' double. He buys her the clothes his adored wore. The real woman who loves him, played by Barbara Bel Geddes, cannot by any trick of her devising spring him from his fixation. She is witty and talented and lover-ly and sisterly and as good-looking as any woman should have to be, but she is no match for Kim Novak.

As Stewart obsessed on his sex object, so did Alfred Hitchcock in reality. Ranks of actresses could attest to that, from the late Ingrid Bergman to Tippi Hedren, Melanie Griffith's mother. Kim Novak herself hated her performance in *Vertigo*. She said Hitchcock treated her like an object. "I wanted her face to be blank," Hitchcock said, "but she insisted on doodling on it." So whatever Novak tried to do in the way of acting in the movie, he carefully edited out and she appeared impassive and remote on the screen, with eyebrows like boomerangs flying nowhere. The other side of the malaise this objectivization caused could be seen in Alma Hitchcock's eyes, staring out of the pages of Donald Spoto's posthumous biography of her husband: witty, talented, utterly defeated.

By the time Brian got around to making such films as *Dressed to Kill* and *Scarface* and *Body Double*, this fashioning of women into beautiful objects in the movies had mutated from Hitchcock's hang-up into a major social disorder of the times.

Brian never thought of actors as "cattle," as Hitchcock had. He loved the inventiveness of actors; hoped for it to happen and always encouraged it. Nothing in *Body Double* delighted him more than Melanie Griffith's "doodlings" on the character of Holly Body.

But the times were against him. His objectivizations of women in the suspense-and-pursuit genre he had come to own piqued angers and sorrows Alfred Hitchcock had never had to deal with.

The images of beautiful women on camera had become so pervasive in our country by 1984, so head-turning and compelling, that women who were never likely to be photographed felt themselves downright ugly if they were not prepared to be photographed at any moment. For example, since the camera made you look fatter, and film actresses consequently stayed really thin, women who had absolutely no reason at all to be

really thin dieted epidemically and walked out of wonderful restaurants hungry as wolves. And self-hatred was rampant among people who had long ago made intellectual peace with themselves but could never resign themselves to their body image.

Of course, the big winners in the culture of the camera were supposed to be the beautiful girls.

Look at Jessica Lange, the guys said on the *Tootsie* set. The camera loves her. She can walk, not walk, smile, not smile, it doesn't matter, *the camera loves her*. Therefore, said Sydney Pollack, we immediately understand why Dustin Hoffman loves her. Her beauty is the "shorthand" the camera needs to tell the story.

Brian likewise had become expert—as all Hollywood directors must—on the visual joys of exceptional flesh. Melanie Griffith and Deborah Shelton were gorgeous; they could not have been cast except that they were gorgeous; that was what the public wanted; that was what the camera loved.

Now change the point of view.

You are Frances Farmer. Marilyn Monroe. Elizabeth Taylor. Deborah Shelton. Melanie Griffith.

This large stiff camera is pointing at you and it loves you on behalf of all the men who will love you. If you turn your right side to the camera, it may love you less. (Brian and his cinematographer, Steve Burum, agreed that Melanie's good side was her left side.) If you are bathed in a harsh blue-white light, the camera may love you not at all. (Carol Burnett, working with Elizabeth Taylor on an HBO movie called *Between Friends*, said admiringly, "She's a professional. She knows her light.") So all these guys are out there with their silk tents and their pink filters, and you are learning which light makes them love you most, and you are making sure that the right side of your face is kissing the camera back,

because if you don't, the men who are represented by the camera will stop loving you.

A real lover gives everything to a woman and adds nothing.

But the camera—like old Jimmy idolizing Kim in *Vertigo*—gives nothing and adds everything.

True, the actress can have self-love as a result of her experience in the movies. However, it is as addictive as cocaine and likewise a love-substitute, and if she needs it too much, it may poison her and turn her into a monster like Gloria Swanson in *Sunset Boulevard*. She does not profit from the envy of other women. Her hell is her hell; theirs is theirs.

It was into this emotional mess that Alfred Hitchcock's grammar had led Brian De Palma.

Body Double was one of several films Brian was interested in making after *Scarface*. He also wanted to do a movie called *Fire*, about a successful rock-and-roll singer who consumes himself. *Fire* would have starred John Travolta and would have been produced at Keith Barish Productions. However, there was a problem with Keith Barish about how much the movie should cost.

"And then Travolta got involved with another picture," Brian said, "so it really burned out. So I said I had a picture called *Body Double*. So we proceeded to set it up wherever we could."

Where they could was Columbia Pictures.

Craig Baumgarten, a young studio executive who had been working with Keith Barish and become familiar with both *Body Double* and *Fire* while he was there, had moved over to Columbia and brought his enthusiasm for both projects with him. Now that *Fire* was delayed, *Body Double* was up next.

Guy McElwaine had taken over as president of Columbia

when Frank Price and some of his associates left for Universal. Although it is probably a mistake to characterize studio administrations, it can fairly be said that McElwaine's was young, much younger than usual. Craig Baumgarten is not yet thirty-five and he has a very big office and a lot of influence in deciding who does and does not get a slice of the golden pie. He smiled a happy smile, ingenuous and easygoing. His shirt rumpled up out of his belt after a long day's work. It was almost seven and his secretary was still in the outer office answering calls and people were still waiting on line to see him. Craig said that he used to work for the Lindsay administration in New York. And his youthful energy did indeed recall John Lindsay's campaign slogan: "He is fresh and everybody else is tired."

"I was a fan of Brian's before I had anything to do with the movie business," Craig said, "when I was just a fan of movies. I wanted *Fire* and *Body Double* to come to Columbia because I think Brian is one of the really uniquely talented filmmakers of our time. Only one other filmmaker had the ability to make these kinds of suspense/thriller films with the same skill, and that was Hitchcock."

Body Double fit many bills for Baumgarten and Columbia. It was in the same suspense/horror tradition as *Carrie*, one of the top-grossing films of 1976, and might well be in the same commercial tradition. It didn't need a big star. ("We agreed," Craig said, "that there would not be three more people to come and see this movie if it had a big star. Brian De Palma is the star of this movie.") This meant that *Body Double* could be made in the modest below-ten-million-dollar class. Of course Brian would get a lot of money—a reported million and a half—and he owned a large chunk of the film, but everybody else involved was earning a living, not a fortune.

Marty Bauer, Brian's agent who had made the *Scarface* deal

as well as the *Body Double* deal, said that he and Brian "both felt it would be advisable that for his next picture, he should make a movie that did not have a substantial possibility of going over budget. He had gone over budget on *Blow Out*. He had gone over budget on *Scarface*. It gives you a bad reputation to go over budget. . . . The studios will often go with a less exciting and interesting director who they know will be safe to bring in the project on the budget they've agreed upon, than to go to a Francis Coppola who they think has a chance of going considerably over budget even though Francis is one of the greatest directors who ever lived. Brian is on the cusp of gaining that reputation. We both felt that *Fire* was a very physical production, with a major star, Travolta, a difficult project to bring in on budget. Keith Barish Productions and Fox wanted the movie to be made at $14 million, and we felt that the movie would cost $18–20 million. So we decided that it would be a terrible mistake for Brian to get involved with another movie where there was a lowball budget [Bauer always believed the *Scarface* budget was grossly underestimated] and decided instead to make a movie with a real, reasonable budget that Brian felt comfortable staying within."

The very best thing about *Body Double* from a studio point of view was that it was assured of an enthusiastic young audience. The demographics showed that the movie audience was massively concentrated among the very young, in the 15–22 age group, and the young people loved Brian De Palma movies. It was possible to meet teenagers from California to New Jersey who had gone back to see the *Scarface* shootout again and again, laughing more happily each time. And you could bet that a generation that enjoyed seeing (more correctly, imagining they had seen) a man dismembered by a chain saw would likewise groove on the Indian's drill. Like Brian himself, the kids seemed to think it was "just a movie." They paid their money and screamed

and laughed and then went out for pizza. They did not judge the effect on women or cops or Cubans or Indians, they did not judge the effect on their souls.

"The reason that Hollywood will never eat Brian up alive," said Marty Bauer, "is he'll always say to me, 'I'll make another movie. I'll go do something else. It's not the beginning or the end of the world. *Body Double* is not about the history of Western civilization or the Crucifixion. I'll make another movie!' "

It was this attitude—cultivated, defensive, pragmatic, invulnerable—that motivated De Palma always to have another idea in the drawer, always to have three or four movies he could make instead. There was only one alternative he did not have. He could not stop making movies.

Brian got the idea for *Body Double* when he was making *Dressed to Kill*. His star was Angie Dickinson. Her character was supposed to be masturbating in a shower, and he needed a body double for her to do the nude scenes.

"It was the idea of the body double that started me off," Brian said. "First you create a situation in which you make somebody a voyeur, you create something they want to watch. Well, what do they want to watch? So you get somebody walking around with their clothes off. Well, who do you get to do that? Well, if I'm hiring a body double, I call a casting agent, and what kind of girls do you think come to audition? They're Pets and Playmates and girls who do sex pictures who have great bodies. The whole process of looking at bodies to find someone to double someone, it's a bizarre experience! They just walk in and say hi, take off their clothes, you look at them, say that's right and that's wrong and thank you very much. I spent a long time just looking at bodies, it was like being in some kind of a painting class. It's very difficult to find a body because people are so used to looking at great bodies, from *Penthouse* and

Playboy, and looking at the most beautiful women lit the most beautiful ways. I mean if you're gonna put someone on film and take their clothes off, you'd better make them look good, really good. Because if you don't, people go 'Are you kidding?!' . . . I mean, there's certainly something interesting about an ugly body or a grotesque body, but I would feel kind of guilty about exposing someone to that. See, my theory is that if you have a beautiful body, you don't have to be ashamed of it. I don't feel badly about making that a part of what I'm doing. Because years from now, when you're a shriveled old person, you'll look at it and say boy, didn't I look terrific?!'' (Thus did the French poet Ronsard tell his mistress that someday when she was old and shriveled, she would sit by the fire and draw comfort from the fact that ''*Ronsard me célébrait du temps que j'étais belle.*'')

Angie Dickinson, according to Brian, would probably have been willing to do the nude scenes in *Dressed to Kill* (''Would this body lie to you?'' said her avocado ads), but Brian would have none of it. ''What's the point?'' he said. ''Why put your principal in a situation in which she's uncomfortable when she can rest and get ready for the next shot? It saves time, it's more efficient. Why should she sit around and be cold in the shower when she doesn't have to? I never like to put people in situations where I can double them. They have enough to worry about.''

One case in which De Palma did *not* double was the case of Sissy Spacek's hand reaching up out of the grave at the end of *Carrie*. That was not somebody else's hand. That was Spacek's hand. ''I said, 'Sissy, come on, I'll get a stunt person, what do you want, to be buried in the ground?!' She said [he imitates her, very grave and serious], 'Brian, I have to do this.' So we had to bury her. Bury her! We had to put her in a box and stick her underneath the ground. Well, I had her husband bury her because I certainly didn't want to bury her. I used to walk

around and set up the shot and every once in a while, we'd hear Sissy [this he does in a wee small buried voice]: 'Are we ready yet?' Yeah, Sissy, we're gonna be ready real soon.'' Brian laughed. He talks in dialogues.

So. While Brian is hiring a body double for Angie Dickinson, he meets all these women with perfect bodies and he starts thinking: Who are these people? And he asks himself: If I wanted someone to witness something, anything, how would I catch their eye?

''This guy—Sam-The Indian-Alex Revelle—is basically fishing for his voyeur. So how do you catch a voyeur?''

First you eliminate the bad candidates. You eliminate ''people who have a strong sense of themselves, who want to be *in* the room, not watching from outside. Voyeurs are not participating in their lives. They're basically extras, not leading characters.''

So now he was fixated on the idea of the body double—what kind of a girl is she?—and the voyeur—what kind of a guy is he? And it began to shape up that she was probably a girl who did sex movies (Holly Body) and he was probably a rejected, miserable, lonely guy who was subject to attacks of immobilizing claustrophobia and could easily fall in love with a woman from afar. Jake Scully.

Once Brian had conceived the basics of his story, he did not necessarily want to direct it. He was on fire for *Fire* and thought he would only produce *Body Double*. He linked up with a young director, Ken Wiederhorn, and Wiederhorn recommended a young writer from New York, Robert Avrech.

''Brian wrote a thirteen-page treatment which was a step outline,'' said Avrech. ''It went like this. 'One. John [later to become Jake] is an actor with a stock company. He gets fired from his job and comes back to the city [New York, later to become Los Angeles]. Finds his girl friend in bed with another man. Two. John looks around for a new place to live. Three.

He meets another actor' . . . it was like that,'' Avrech continued respectfully. ''All laid out.''

This step outline got into Avrech's hands in 1981–82. ''Brian wanted to get out of making those kinds of movies. I don't know why he should . . . but anyway, he wanted to make something else and he decided that he wanted to produce the movie. He wanted to control the whole project himself. He was going to pay my salary, Ken's salary, and then after the film was written, he felt he would lay it off on a studio.''

Avrech started working, consulting often with Brian and Wiederhorn, wrote three drafts and finally came up with a script that made all three happy. According to Avrech, Sherry Lansing at Twentieth Century-Fox liked one of the drafts that Brian himself was not so crazy about. But the deal at Twentieth fell through when Lansing left to work with Stanley Jaffe. A potential deal at Lorimar fell through when Irwin Yablans and Brian could not agree on finances. Likewise the potential deal at Keith Barish.

The deal at Columbia happened only when Brian said he would direct the movie as well as produce it.

''It's a Brian De Palma film, not my film,'' Avrech said. ''Brian is the best story editor I've ever worked with in my life, because he is not afraid to leap into the outrageous. He's not bound by the ordinary rules of narrative that other people are bound by. Writers have a tendency to try to be logical, to try and maintain the constancy of a character. And that can be a great failing when you're making a movie; you have to make narrative leaps sometimes.

''The best example is this: in my draft of the screenplay, we had a scene which was originally a Rastifarian following the woman into Bendel's. [Ultimately it became the Indian following the woman into the Rodeo Collection.] Now John [who became Jake] follows her into Bendel's. She buys something. She goes

outside into the park. She drops a package into the garbage can. John opens up the package and finds a pair of her underpants.

"Brian said okay, now he puts the underpants in his pocket.

"I said, what?! Are you crazy?! How can he put the underpants in his pocket?! Why?! For what earthly reason?! Brian said I don't know but it's a good idea . . . he said go and write it, try it out.

"Now that's a real piece of genius, putting the underpants in the pocket, because later on the underpants fall out when he's talking to the cop. It's useful. It makes sense. I mean I never would have done that. Even if I'd thought of it, I never would have written it because it's *gross*. But it works. It works, you know?"

What about dialogue?

"We never talked about dialogue," Avrech said. "He left that completely to me. Because he knows, once he gets on the set, it depends upon the actors, what they can do. If you write some good dialogue, you know Brian is going to keep it if the actor is able to deliver it. Writing dialogue is the least important part of screenwriting anyway, it's negligible. Screenwriting isn't about dialogue; screenwriting is only about structure."

Once the movie was cast and into preproduction, Avrech was "out of the picture." He heard Brian was doing a rewrite. Would Brian like me to work on the rewrite, Avrech asked Marty Bauer, the agent? The answer was that Brian wanted to do the rewrite himself. "I said fine, can I see a copy when he's finished?" So they sent Avrech a copy of the rewrite and he gave Brian his comments a week before they started shooting. "I was pleased," Avrech recalled. "Certain things in the rewrite were better than what I did."

Like the murder. Avrech's script didn't have the drill murder; his murder happened by the pool, a much more complicated, infinitely less sexual butchering. "I thought the drill murder

was much more suited to Brian's talents." The claustrophobia too was put in by Brian: "I didn't have any of that anywhere," Avrech said. He had no input after those comments on the rewrite; no input on the casting. He was concerned that Craig Wasson would have trouble keeping the sympathy of the audience after he tries out and lands a part in the X-rated movie, but Brian assured him that Craig's sweet hangdog demeanor would ensure a continual inflow of good will. "That's all that's needed for the part, really," Avrech said. "Because he's really just a mechanism in a very complicated machine.

"Brian invited me to come out to the shooting and stuff but I got involved in other projects and I started procrastinating and after a while I said I don't want to go on the set, I don't want to see this, I'm going to feel like saying things that I shouldn't and it's going to be very painful to me, besides I don't like being separated from my family."

This willingness to write and retreat was by far the most pragmatic attitude for a screenwriter to take toward a movie he could not hope to control in the slightest.

Craig Baumgarten had an attitude that protected him in much the same way. "I'm not a social scientist," he said. "I can't as a studio executive sit here and try to make decisions about films based on studies and polls predicting how an audience may or may not respond. I think you can paralyze yourself if every time you decide to make a movie, you try to analyze the three or four million people you may or may not offend. I can only try and make, along with all the other people here, the movies that we want to go see."

Brian De Palma had an attitude that protected him in much the same way; it hinged on never being too committed to a project not to drop it. He called his movies "enchiladas" or "turkeys," and he always had another project to fall back on.

And each of the attitudes hinged on not caring. At the least, it made you appear invulnerable; at best, you might begin to believe it yourself. That was what made you a pro in the movies. People who worried about whether it made sense or was as good as Kafka or was bad for society were better off in other businesses.

Of course, one wondered how Craig Wasson would react to the notion that he was "a mechanism in a very complicated machine." How would he manifest the professionalism of not caring?

He stood in the sunshine at Long Beach, waiting for the lights to be set for a shot in which he follows Gloria onto the beach to warn her about the Indian. His blond, curly hair was shining; he looked tan, relaxed, and handsome. The weather was beautiful, the dialogue almost nonexistent; the art was in the camera; the impact was in the sparkle of the sun on the water and the dangerous glare on the sunglasses of the Indian.

"I can't believe I'm being paid to do this," Craig said, grinning lightheartedly.

Casting *Body Double* was Brian's doing; he had complete artistic control of the picture. Columbia could "suggest things," he said, "and feel strongly about things and have meetings about things. But ultimately I make the decision." He added a codicil, based on experience. "They can always fire you, of course. Anybody can get fired."

Columbia suggested things, felt strongly, had meetings when Brian decided to hire Craig Wasson to play the role of Jake Scully. Craig is not your usual romantic leading man type. Intense and earnest, rather slightly built, he had an Oregon freshness and beautiful blue eyes that seemed to tell the

world he was brand new; the most unsullied spirit in California. As an actor, he had been impressive in Arthur Penn's *Four Friends*, and in *Ghost Story*, with Melvyn Douglas, John Houseman, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and Fred Astaire. Brian had seen him on television as well, and harbored a craving to use him someday. As a musician, Craig often wrote pieces for the works he performed in: the score for *All God's Chillun Got Wings* with George C. Scott, a song for the film *Boys in Company C*, and most recently the music for Leonard Peters's production of Margaret Hatch's play, *Stem of a Briar*. Craig's rock group appeared around town and enjoyed a brisk young following.

Hung up on Jimmy Stewart in *Vertigo*, Brian liked Craig Wasson because he felt he could easily portray a man who was "very much over his head. Jake has a vulnerability; a sensitivity; he's the kind of guy who can fall in love with somebody from afar. Also he has a chameleon ability to change. Which was important because he's an actor who's acting in the movie. Everybody's acting in *Body Double*. Sam is acting, Jake is acting, Holly is acting, everybody's playing different parts."

Brian overrode any arguments against Craig and that was that.

For the deadly Sam Bouchard, Brian used an actor named Gregg Henry who bore a strong resemblance to John Lithgow's blond villain in *Obsession* and who had in fact had a one-line role in *Scarface*. Gregg was the American in the circle of cocaine conspirators whom Al Pacino meets on the estate of a Bolivian millionaire. "How do you do, Mr. Montana?" was all Gregg had to say. "I thought it would take two and a half days to shoot that scene," he laughed. "It took more like two and a half weeks."

Trained in the classics, Gregg had come from Denver and starved briefly in L.A. before landing a major television role—Wesley Jordache in *Rich Man, Poor Man: Book II*. He had

worked steadily if sporadically ever since. Time had made certain improvements for Gregg. He had started out as a male ingenue. Now life in Hollywood had matured him and a slightly receding hairline had pressed him into character roles, with a consequently broadened range of possibilities. Jimsie Eason, assistant to executive producer Howard Gottfried, had seen Gregg work at the Los Angeles Theatre Unit and had been impressed. When he came to audition for Sam Bouchard-Alex Revelle-The Indian, competing with such actors as David Dukes and Guy Boyd (who ultimately played McLean), Gregg said, "I think Jimsie put in a good word for me. I think that helped, I do."

The role of Gloria, Brian noted, was harder to cast than the others "because she has to be stunning, she has to be vulnerable, and she doesn't have any lines."

Deborah Shelton couldn't believe it when she got the part.

It was her first feature. She had done a lot of television, usually playing "the girl" in guest shots on such series as "T. J. Hooker," "B. J. and the Bear," "The Yaegers," and "The A-Team." She had been Miss U.S.A. She came from Virginia, tried modeling, married an Israeli composer-producer and had two children, to whom she was always rushing home after being beaten up or overcome with carnal passion or drilled to death in *Body Double*. Shelton definitely did not live her role. If she absolutely had to talk about a penis, she called it a "who-dingy." However, she was stunning, she could be plenty vulnerable, and she didn't mind not having any lines.

Melanie Griffith played Holly Body.

Slender as a jonquil, she had creamy white skin, tender wide sea-blue eyes, and white-blonde punk hair that stuck up in pinnacles. She was the youngest of Brian's four principals but one suspected that Melanie had "lived" longer than all of them put together. Her mother is Tippi Hedren, Alfred Hitchcock's

leading lady in *The Birds* and *Marnie* and, according to Donald Spoto, the source of his greatest heartbreak. Melanie's father is Peter Griffith; her stepfather, Noel Marshall, had produced *The Exorcist* among other things and was likened by a former associate to an all-powerful, mesmerizing Hollywood Svengali.

As a teenager, Melanie made her film debut in Arthur Penn's *Night Moves*. She had moved on to *Smile*, then *The Drowning Pool* with Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward. With her best friend, Jamie Lee Curtis, and Al Pacino's best friend, Kathleen Quinlan, she had starred in a TV movie called *She's in the Army Now*. Her roles were mostly sexy; she had no hang-ups about nudity. In *Fear City*, she would appear as a New York stripper. She was married to Steven Bauer, known to his intimates as Rocky, the handsome Cuban-American actor who had achieved sudden prominence as Al Pacino's lustful sidekick, Manolo, in *Scarface*. Thus, Melanie knew Brian socially, long before *Body Double*.

"When Rocky was doing *Scarface*, I got to know Brian, kind of. We went around every week to somebody's house and they would make dinner and we'd play Trivial Pursuit.

"There was no alcohol, no drugs. There was coffee and water and Trivial Pursuit. It was great. We stayed up till three in the morning playing. Then Brian was talking about this movie and he asked to meet Jamie [Lee Curtis].

"I said to him: 'How can you do that? You call me up, you want to meet my best friend, and you don't even consider me for the role?' He goes: 'You want to go out for the role?' I said: 'Yes, absolutely.' Rocky was going, 'No, no . . .' Then Brian showed us this movie with Annette Haven [the well-known adult film star]. He said 'I want to use Annette in the movie anyway, but I'll send you the script.' The next day I get the script. I really liked it, obviously, 'cause it's a great script. I called Brian and told him I really liked it. (Rocky is going 'No!

No!") Brian said to come in and read. I worked and worked really hard on the scene in the bar. But then I was late. I overslept. And then I read with four different guys; one of them was Craig. And Brian said I was real good."

("Beautiful," Brian recalled. "Vulnerable. Like Marilyn Monroe.")

If Brian was a little surprised that Melanie Griffith wanted to read for the role of Holly Body, it was because he already knew that the gamest young actresses would have real psychic trouble playing a porn queen, and appearing to masturbate on camera.

"I tried to get a lot of people to test for the part," Brian said, "but I couldn't get many because of the nature of the material. I talked to everybody that was interested in it, and I said there's going to be a lot of nudity in this, don't do it if you're uncomfortable. . . ." He was sitting in his trailer, eating the large hot lunch which his old friend and new assistant, Camilla Turnbull, had prepared for him. "The fact is that I tried to make them feel as comfortable as possible. If you're going to have somebody walk around and do some kind of masturbatory acting routine, you don't want to do it in an office or on a cold sound stage. I had a housekeeper at my house, and Tani Cohen, my assistant, basically I wanted them to feel very comfortable and tried to be as open as possible and say: this is it; be prepared; be aware." His normally husky voice turned to absolute gravel. "And the story that raged through Hollywood was that I was having girls come up to my house and masturbate. I was waiting, just waiting for somebody to dare to write that."

Marty Bauer, Brian's agent, said that there were two other actresses besides Melanie and Annette Haven who wanted to try out for the role.

"Brian said to each one: 'You know there is simulated masturbation in the movie.' They said: 'No problem.' Brian said: 'You're not going to be able to do it. You're going to get

on the set and there's going to be the cinematographer and me and you're going to need Valium.'

''They said: 'No problem.' Brian said: 'You're going to freeze. I've done this before. It is very very difficult for a woman to do this on camera.' They said: 'No problem.' He said: 'Okay. Come with a leotard, or camisole or whatever, we're going to put you on tape. We'll do it at my house. We'll put you on tape and see how you react to it.' '' Both actresses, according to Bauer, ''freaked out'' and never made it through the reading.

''Brian did it that way because, in my opinion, he was sensitive to how difficult it would be. He also had a desire not to have an actress freak out on the set and have everybody waiting ten days while the picture careened out of budget.''

No wonder then that Brian had considered using as his Holly Body a woman who was already one of the most famous adult film queens in the country, Annette Haven.

She had come to Brian's attention during the winter before *Body Double* started shooting, when Howard Gottfried, the executive producer, went to the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. The X-rated home video marketeers had been denied space on the convention floor, but their wares and their stars were available in hotel rooms close by.

Howard threw up his hands. ''Can you imagine, I went to Las Vegas with my casting lady to look at porno movies?! Can you imagine, I go in, I say . . .''—he straightens his jacket which he always wears with jeans and cocks his head like David Niven—''. . . Uh hello, I am from Columbia Pictures and I would like to talk with you about a major motion picture. . . . I mean, they look at you like you're some kind of a lunatic!''

It is true that Howard Gottfried is not the sort of man you would ordinarily imagine as a sex scout. A voluble New Yorker with a burning concern about social issues, he had made his

name in the film industry as the partner of Paddy Chayefsky in such literate and relevant films as *Hospital* and *Network* and *Altered States*. Culturally and intellectually, Howard was made a little crazy by the porn connections of *Body Double*, all the more so because unlike Brian, unlike Steve Burum, the director of photography, and Joe Napolitano, the first assistant director, Howard Gottfried had *children*. Howard was the one who had to go home to his family in New York and be assaulted by feminist friends at dinner parties who wanted to know if it was true, was Howard really making a pornographic movie?! (''Hello, *sistahs*!,'' said Bette Midler, winking and camping at Gloria Steinem's fiftieth birthday party in New York. ''I have just come in from Hollywood. As you may know, there are no *sistahs* in Hollywood.'') It was lucky for Howard, therefore, that he had a sense of humor. And Brian De Palma's sense of humor meant as much to him as any other element in the movie.

''Why do they say Brian hates women more than other filmmakers?'' Howard asked. ''*Saturday Night Fever* treated women like pieces of meat. And look at *Flashdance*. Sure she had a job, she had ambition, she was liberated. But how does she show us she's liberated? When the ex-wife stops at the table and asks 'What do you two do?' she answers 'We fuck our brains out.' It's insulting to women because it means to be a serious portrayal. Now, look at this scene in *Body Double* with Linda Shaw. Is this a serious portrayal? They're both on these water beds and she's massaging her breasts in this television interview and she's screaming 'I'm coming! I'm coming!' and the interviewer says 'So while she's coming, we'll break for this clip.' Now that's funny. That's fun-nee! How can all these women despise a guy who's as funny as that?!''

The scene that so cracked up Howard, and would truly crack up millions of moviegoers, was based, according to Brian, on a

flash he got while watching cable television one night. "There is a show based in New York called 'Interludes After Midnight,' " he said, "and it has naked hosts talking to naked interviewees. The strangest thing I ever saw was one night it had Marilyn Chambers on. [Chambers is the star of *Behind the Green Door*, a hardcore classic.] You could call in. And you would say 'Hi, Marilyn.' And she'd say 'Hi,' looking at you on the television. And you could say 'Um uh Marilyn, would you walk over there and bend over? Would you spread your legs?' And she would! You could direct her! The anonymous phone caller could direct her to assume all kinds of obscene poses for him to watch on his television set! I said to myself, I don't believe this! I mean, can *you* believe it?!"

When Howard Gottfried went to Las Vegas that winter, he was investigating the facts of the home video porn industry, facts that were vital background for *Body Double*.

The first videotape recorders had appeared in the late 1970s, at a time when Hollywood movies were not yet geared up to be marketed in cassette form. So according to Bob Davis of the *Wall Street Journal*, "pornographers had the prerecorded tape market nearly all to themselves. In 1979, they sold 950,000 tapes; in 1980, the number jumped to 1.3 million. Buying an X-rated tape was a rite of passage for some videotape recorder owners."

As Hollywood movies forged into the market, the X-rated share dropped. *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, noted Davis, sold more than 500,000 videotapes in little more than a month. "That's nearly ten times as many cassettes as *Debby Does Dallas*, the sex-tape industry's biggest seller, has managed in four years. And with 3,500 sex tapes available, the market for pornography may well be saturated."

Although saturation was a danger and such films as *Fleshdance* and *Urban Cowgirls* were not grossing millions, home video

hardcore sex was still a business in which you could make a living. In 1983, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, it accounted for $80 million in retail sales. And you didn't have to buy it to enjoy it. All you needed was a VCR; by May 1984, the world owned more than 50 million; then you could rent a tape for a day or two and copy it. And it was not likely that Jack Valenti and the Motion Picture Association or any federal agency would come after you with a warrant and nab you for piracy.

Howard's investigations in Vegas confirmed Brian De Palma's suspicions that home video sex was a major pastime of those Americans rich enough to own a video cassette recorder. That meant it was a middle-class phenomenon. That meant women were watching it as well as men. (When you don't have to walk into a sleazy theater, you don't care who you might bump into or who's watching you watch.) *And if so many of us were watching at home, then surely we would not be offended when we saw Jake Scully watching on the screen, nor would we reject him as our hero.*

What economics and demographics were to the character of Jake Scully, Annette Haven was to the character of Holly Body. The reality fix.

Annette says she has made more than seventy adult films in the last ten years. She is a petite, slender woman with long auburn hair and refined features. In her movies, she reveals a taut, muscular body; porcelain skin; a bold, steady gaze. Dressed for business, she wears dignified blue silk and rimless glasses. Her hair is pulled off into a bun on the side of her head. She is very opinionated, talking fast and forcefully, evading no question, but her eyes are tumultuous and she seems tougher in her movies than she does offscreen.

"I thought Annette was a very good actress and had a sensational body," Brian said. "So I called her. 'I am Brian De

Palma,' I said, 'I am making this film called *Body Double* and I am interested in talking to you about possibly trying out for it.' Annette didn't know who I was.''

''Well, it was true,'' said Annette Haven, ''I didn't know what films he'd done. I don't go to see violent films or horror films or any of that sort of thing. I watch cartoons. This is my taste. I like Dr. Snuggles and Bugs Bunny in the morning. I like comedy. I'm agitated enough in real life, I have enough adrenalin for six people, I don't need to go see exciting films.

''So he's on the phone running down this list. And it's, like, '*Dressed to Kill*?' 'No.' 'Uh, *Blow Out*?' 'No. No no no no.' And he finally got to *Carrie*. And I said 'Oh yes, I saw that film. I *liked* that film.' So finally I had seen at least one of his films. And then he made a mistake.''

''I said, 'I'm doing a film that has a character who is a porn star,' '' Brian said.

''So. It was up against the wall!'' Annette said. ''It's called 'Don't ever use that word around me, I really don't care to hear it, it's exceedingly insulting, it's an absolute misnomer if you happen to know what the word means,' and then I proceeded to delineate for him what the word means. Pornography means that something is obscene and if you look up obscene it's got to be filthy, violent, and offensive to decency. I just don't think that consenting adult sex is violent, filthy, or offensive to decency, therefore the word is not appropriate, so I don't want it applied to me or to anything I do because all I do is consenting adult sexuality and healthy sexuality at that!''

'' 'There's nothing pornographic about my films,' she said,'' Brian continued. '' 'They're adult films!' I said 'Hey, okay, you got it. I'm coming to San Francisco, could we sit down and talk?' ''

''We had late tea at a very nice restaurant in a hotel,'' Annette said. ''I was in the lobby waiting for him and this guy

kind of dressed in battle fatigues appears. And I thought, that's got to be De Palma. Definitely has got to be De Palma because it takes somebody with true power to look this casual in this posh place."

"By the time I got there, she knew better who I was," Brian said.

"Oh, I already knew about him," said Annette, twinkling her small chiseled face. "I just wasn't going to let him *know* I knew. We'd done a shot in a film, in 1977, and the director kept saying, okay, we're going to do the De Palma pan now. And we did this wonderful pan around the whole room, it was quite beautiful. Brian has a brilliant cinema technique. It's no wonder people imitate him. But I wasn't going to give him any breaks because I wanted to see what kind of person he was."

"I said, 'Look,' " Brian went on, " 'all I want to do basically is to talk with you and get a lot of information about your life in order to make this Holly Body character. And I'd like to test you for the movie.' "

"Brian impressed me as being a healthy, very nice person, so I agreed to come down to Los Angeles."

"So I had my assistant bring her up to my house and I sat and talked to her and videotaped her for about four hours. I don't think she quite believed, until I drove her home that night, that I wasn't going to glue her up in the house and jump on her. She couldn't believe I actually rented a hotel room for her and actually at 10:30 said, 'Well, it's time to go home,' and I drove her home and said good night. It blew her mind. She couldn't believe it."

Annette began to trust Brian. She talked freely to him; he taped it all.

"When I started to write material that I got from her into the movie, I'd use the long anecdotes from her life for telling how

she got into the business. And when she read this in the script, she threw a fit. 'How can you do this?!' she said.

"I said 'Annette! I've always been straight with you. Why do you think I was videotaping you? I was using this material to put into this character, and if you play this character, I'm going to play this character as you!'

"She said: 'But I never thought you were actually going to use real material from my life!'

"So I took it out," Brian said. "I took it out because it upset her so much. Then I coached her, I worked the scenes over with her, all the acting scenes in the movie. The masturbation routine which is in the movie she helped me work out, it's part of one of her stage acts. I gave her a speech to learn from *Middle of the Night* [Paddy Chayefsky's drama of aging and loneliness]. She'd never had lines to learn. She went home and learned them. She'd never really been auditioned. It was like out of left field for her. She did the scene very well. Very well. She's a very good actress."

Brian looked at Annette Haven's screen test. He looked at Melanie Griffith's screen test. "There was no comparison," he said. He called Annette and told her that after all her hard work, the coaching, the taping, she had lost the part to Melanie. "Normally I don't talk to actors who don't pass a test. But with Annette . . . she had so many hopes. . . . I said to her, 'You know,' I said, 'Melanie's just got a lot more acting skills than I could ever possibly develop in you in the period of time that I would get to make this movie.' " However, he asked her to remain available as an occasional adviser to the film.

Recalling this incident may have brought some of the pain back to Annette Haven, but she shrugged it off; she was a realist. She was sitting in Brian De Palma's office, somewhat engulfed by his large Papa Bear chair, smoking. "I went through a couple of days of being radically depressed," she said, "and

then I realized that, seeing Brian had chosen Melanie, he was looking for something different than what I had to offer. I am not a vulnerable female. I wouldn't have played a vulnerable female within the context of this role because it would not have been accurate. But Brian should have whatever he wants. It's his film. And with Melanie, Brian made the ideal choice. He got the benefit of my experience, my input, and he also got someone with whom he could create a character that he wanted. And if he tried to put me in the characterization that Melanie is playing we would have been at each other's throats for the entire film because I wouldn't play a punk, there is no way. No way that I would let my hair be cut short and dyed white. There are no punks in my industry that are box office. Because punk is a neurotic look. Nobody is going to want to see a punk in an adult movie; not even other punks, I don't think, get off on punks. So Brian is still taking liberties with reality which is actually a function of cinema anyway so it's not that big a deal."

Columbia had been deeply disturbed by Brian's interest in using an actual adult film star in *Body Double*.

"I got a call from Craig Baumgarten," Marty Bauer recalled, "and he said this studio is not going to make this picture with Annette Haven."

"We wanted to be confident that Brian wasn't interested in making an X movie," said Craig Baumgarten. "I had made it clear that Columbia Pictures was not interested in Annette Haven starring in the movie. I don't think the movie would have reached the audience that we wanted. I think she would have given an aura to the movie that would have been completely inaccurate and inconsistent with the movie that Brian, Guy, and I had talked about making. I told Brian that if he wanted to make the movie with her, then we didn't want to do it."

In considering Annette for the role of Holly Body, Brian had pulled from his distant Italian past and merrily put the studio through a siege of old-fashioned *agita*. He had allowed himself to be interviewed by *Esquire* magazine wherein he said that *Body Double* was going to be a solid X-rated roller coaster that would knock everybody's socks off.

"He enjoys tweaking the nose of the Establishment," said Marty Bauer, ever mild.

In the *Body Double* shooting script, there is a scene in which Jake Scully and Holly Body are in a bar. Jake is plying Holly with a few drinks, pretending that he's a hardcore producer interested in casting her in his newest film. In fact he is trying to find out how she got to be the body double for his butchered love, Gloria. And Holly's responses echo what Brian De Palma learned from Annette Haven.

HOLLY
So you want me to star in your picture.

JAKE
That's right. I've been following your pornos for years.

HOLLY
(suddenly hard)
Don't call them pornos—there's nothing pornographic about them. They're adult films.

JAKE
Okay. Adult films.

HOLLY
Don't ever be disrespectful!

JAKE
I'm sorry, I didn't mean to be. Why don't you give me a rundown on your most recent credits?

HOLLY
All rightee, I think I can remember most of them:
Let's see, there's um ... *Gidget Gets It. Close Encounters of Every Kind. Back Seat Babes. Fast Flesh. Misty Mozart. Two Males for Sister Sarah.* And, um, *Holly Does Hollywood.* That's more or less my major credits.

JAKE
You're busy.

HOLLY
I'm good—and I can keep a guy rock hard for hours. You don't need any fluffers when you hire me. You're really serious, huh?

JAKE
Of course.

HOLLY
Okay, good. Just a few things I like to get straight, right up front, so that there's no misunderstandings later on. I do not do ani-

> mal acts. I do not do S & M or any variations of that particular bent. No water sports either. I will not shave my pussy. No fist-fucking, and absolutely no coming in my face.

This scene—a large part of which was eventually edited out of the movie—was shot at a chic nightspot called Voilà at the Beverly Center on La Cienega. The crew had arrived to set up before six in the morning; but they could not get started shooting until well after nine, because union rules required that Craig Wasson have twelve hours off between shootings and it hadn't been twelve hours yet.

The club was wallpapered in a kind of mauve velvet; the bars were laid out in concentric semicircles backed with mirrors and topped with shiny black enameled surfaces. Glasses and bottles caught the lights and glared back at the camera. When the gels went up and the lights went on, Voilà turned screaming fuchsia.

Minutes before Craig was due on the set, Brian arrived. He was wearing his olive green safari suit. He spoke to no one. He lumbered in and sat down; waited. With him came his two assistants, Camilla Turnbull and Tani Cohen. Camilla had long silky pale hair; she was poetic and arts-wise and came from the East. Tani had black curly hair; she was vivacious and street-smart and came from California. As loyal ladies-in-waiting to a demanding pasha, Tani and Camilla had become friends. They substituted for each other; carved out little areas of responsibility for themselves; played word games with each other on long shooting nights; brought men friends to the set sometimes. One of them could always be found near Brian, carrying a blue thermos full of coffee which he drank all day long.

The three major leaders of the film after Brian were in place, making their last-minute calculations, all their energy concentrated in their eyes.

Steve Burum, the director of photography, nosed around with his light meter, looking, looking. He always wore a baseball cap and a windbreaker with his thick glasses and something about his haircut as well reminded you of a brainy kid. Burum said that his dream was to have his own private screening theater with a good 35-millimeter print of every movie ever made.

Ida Random, the production designer, mosied down the length of one of the gleaming bars, looking, looking. She was enwrapped in one of her serapes. Her pale hair turned fuchsia then pink then scarlet then fuchsia as she passed beneath the adjusting lights. Every surface, every color, every material, the look and style of everything we would see in the movie was Ida's responsibility. For twenty years, she had worked her way upward in an industry dominated by men, and virtually all of the people who worked for her now were men. Like anyone who is being watched, she tended to try a little harder.

Joe Napolitano, the first assistant director, had worked with Brian on *Blow Out* and *Scarface* and knew him as well or better than anyone else on the production. Short and good-looking, with an uptilting mouth always ready to grin, Joe was responsible for seeing to it that Brian got exactly what Brian wanted. Howard Gottfried called him by the affectionate Yiddish diminutive "Yossele" because he gave the impression of being such a sweet guy, a regular pussycat.

One of Joe's main responsibilities was background; the extras. They piled into Voilà at seven in the morning, looking young and hip as Voilà customers should look.

"Hi," they said, "didn't we meet in the Burt Reynolds movie?"

"Oh yeah. Hi."

The restaurant, looking for future business, asked the extras to sign up at the front desk. Name. Address. Profession. "I

have no profession," said one handsome young man. "I am an extra."

By the time Craig Wasson appeared on the set, Joe Napolitano had all the extras in place, and could take up his own position at Brian's flank. Like Ida Random and Steve Burum, he summoned all his concentration and his experience and his talent and *looked*: at the set, the lights, the actors, the costumes, the colors, the shadows, the reflections, everything.

Craig was wearing a maroon leather jacket, tacky gold chains, and a coke spoon, because in the Voilà scene, he was portraying a man attempting to pass himself off as an adult movie producer for the luscious but skeptical Holly. Brian took one look at Craig and sent him back for different hair: wet, slicked back, so it would gleam and glisten like the bar and the chains and the jacket.

Melanie had been gotten up by Gloria Greshem, the costume designer, in a bright blue jacket with multicolored tinsel epaulettes. Brian did not love Melanie's earrings. They tried a succession of new ones in the middle of the shooting; maybe this drop, maybe that. "Gloria!" Melanie crooned. "Gloria, I don't want silver." Gloria agreed. Melanie sniffed. She had allergies. She always carried tissues. She picked through Gloria's earring collection, sniffing. Finally, Melanie found an earring she liked for the ear that would face the camera. Then she thought no, maybe not. "See, look at this," she said, opening her jacket to reveal a black lace camisole top and a leopard print scarf, "so much pizzazz," and they decided to forget the earrings. Melanie Griffith may have squeaked in a still small voice, she may have sniffled and looked grave and childlike at the world, but she had absolute control of her earrings.

To get to the scene, Craig and Melanie ad-libbed a little. She wanted to know from Brian why Jake Scully would ask her to name all her movies when he had just seen all her movies. So

they changed his line from "Why don't you give me a rundown on your most recent credits?" to "What's in the can since *Holly Does Hollywood*?" Brian broke up when Craig said that line. The sleazier it was, the funnier it was, and that was what he wanted. They did a take. Melanie screwed up a line. So again. Melanie's teeny tiny black leather skirt got twisted on the bar stool, and Craig was *too* sleazy. So again. But just as they were about to roll, Melanie started to sniffle and needed a Kleenex. So okay, now again. Craig looked like such a hangdog shlemiel, trying to smoke his cigar, that he cracked up Melanie. On the fifth take, she tipped the maraschino cherry from her drink onto her tongue with infantile prurience before listing her movies. Brian roared. On the next take, Craig told her she had a beautiful smile and then dropped his cigar. Brian roared.

The two young actors, having a great time with the scene, could not stop embroidering, she with her cherries, he with his cigars, and the director encouraged them to do so. However, Brian was really restraining himself, for the attitude of the camera, Steve Burum explained, was to "shoot it straight, nice and clear, because what they're *saying* is important."

So there were no fancy moves. No big De Palma pans. Just two people sitting in a bar having a fairly unforgettable conversation.

"When I have to shoot a scene in which two people are talking to each other," Brian said, "what I've learned is to stop trying to make them so wild. Just put the camera down and let the audience look at the actors, that's all that's important. When you're interested in developing characters and feelings about the actors, then you can't be interested in tracking shots, zoom shots, multi-cut different angles, all kinds of wild pyrotechnics, it has no purpose there. Craig is playing this sort of Bob Guccione type, trying to get her to be in his picture, so that's interesting to begin with. She on the other hand is a porno

queen and we're already interested in what kind of people these people are. So the camera doesn't have to do anything. Because it's so interesting to find out what he needs to find out about the mystery and it's so interesting for us to find out about her.''

Finding out about Holly in this instance meant that we were finding out about Annette Haven, for every single item in Holly's list of verbotens, which had originated with Brian, had been checked by Annette.

I do not do animal acts, the script said.

''All this has been changed since then but there was a sequence where, ummmm . . .'' Annette tried to recall the primitive stages of *Body Double*, ''the male lead was pretending to be a producer and ran a casting call and one of the people who came through said, 'Oh, I've got this great act I do with my partner,' and then the partner turns out to be a dog. I said to Brian: 'For God's sake, do you know that you have to go clear to Scandinavia to find somebody who'd do it with a dog and even then you'd have to beat the bushes?!' I said, 'This is not common, Brian. This is not something that somebody walks into an interview with, let's be a little more realistic here. You have a little interview, present your resumé, your portfolio if you have one, maybe you read something from the script and that's it. You do not get dogs or roosters.' ''

I do not do S and M, the script says.

And absolutely no water sports.

What's water sports?? somebody asked Ida Random.

''What?''

When Holly Body says ''no water sports,'' what does that mean?

''Gee, come to think of it, I don't know. Ask Tani. Maybe Tani knows.''

Tani, what does that mean?

"Water sports?" Tani Cohen said. "I always thought it was something going on underwater. I'll ask Annette. She'll know."

Hey Annette, inquired the working women on the sidelines of *Body Double*, what's water sports?

TWO

GLORIA'S HOUSE

"Brian and I traveled in Europe one summer during college. We got a couple of those little scooters and went all over Italy and up into Switzerland and ended up in Paris. Years later, he went back there to one of those small towns to put one of the churches in a movie. He had remembered the church all those years, and could recall little details about it."

Bob Freedman, an old friend, quoted in the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, February 12, 1984

"I realize specifically what I am going to do in a scene when I see the location," Brian explained. "I'll figure out the right location; then change the scene to fit."

This rather simple credo, a bedrock priority of Brian's "visual style," guided the workaday arrangements while shooting *Body*

Double. It meant that the production designer, Ida Random, was relatively much more influential than, for example, the original script writer, Robert Avrech. It meant that the places where the movie was to be shot were relatively much more expensive than, for example, the actors. It meant that the set decorator—a woman with one name: Cloudia—and the location manager, Frank Pierson, were relatively prominent figures, and that among the production assistants, Eric Schwab, who scouted locations, was the one most constantly in touch with the director himself. It also meant that "background"—the extras hired by Joe Napolitano and manipulated by him and the other ADs—was best understood not as part of the cast but as part of the scenery.

Brian developed, deepened, and improved the picture as he saw the possibilities for the story in the location. It was a constant, ongoing process; those who worked for him could not have survived its demands without extraordinary malleability.

Body Double was completely storyboarded, its every image and movement strung out in cartoonlike pictures in large bound books, which had been developed before the shoot began and even before the script was finished. However, the variations on the basic narrative often waited for finalization until the moment of shooting. Sunk heavily in his collapsible canvas chair, looking impassive, looking almost bored, De Palma masked an ever-active mind. And sometimes with hours' or minutes' notice, he would think of something new and the whole company would gamely trundle along behind him in the changed direction, trying to keep up like Alan Arkin running after Peter Falk in *The In-Laws* while the latter yelled "Serpentine! Serpentine!"

Originally, for example, the murderous Indian was to be a Rastifarian who buries Holly and Jake in a remote graveyard. The more Brian thought about the graveyard—it had to be out of use; old; perhaps archaeological—the more he thought it ought to be an Indian graveyard, and thus the character mutated. "I

got the idea of the Indian burying Holly alive . . . and then I started thinking about claustrophobia . . . and then I got the idea of Jake playing a vampire . . . and then the scene [in the movie-within-the-movie at the beginning] where he's in the coffin, and then I got the idea of the acting class where he can't do the exercise because he remembers when he was stuck behind the refrigerator, and then I got the idea when I saw the tunnel that he couldn't go into the tunnel. Yeah. It was the locations. Then it all started to fall into place. And then I rewrote the script."

In one version of *Body Double*, Holly Body turned out to be a partner in crime with Sam Bouchard.

Melanie Griffith didn't like this idea. She was working on her role and now had grown so fond of Holly that she couldn't believe she would murder anybody. Brian agreed.

So Holly became, like Jake, a victim of Sam Bouchard's murderous intentions. They were both to be killed, as Joe Napolitano recalled, "somewhere in the woods."

In a subsequent version, Detective McLean arrived in the woods to save the day just as Sam was about to dispatch Jake in their final battle. That version did not survive because De Palma's detectives almost never save the day. They couldn't help Jennifer Salt in *Sisters*; they couldn't help Travolta in *Blow Out*; if Dennis Franz, playing Detective Marino, actually saved Nancy Allen in *Dressed to Kill*, it was only after making her do all the hard work. So it was decided that Jake Scully would have to dispatch Sam Bouchard on his own, without police back-up.

But how?

By what terrifying means?

This question began to be resolved when Eric Schwab suddenly and quite by chance spotted a new location. It was an aqueduct, an exciting cascade of noisily rushing water. "Brian loved the sound of the water and the awayness of the spot," Joe

said. "It was a great setting. It made a much more effective ending than just out in the woods somewhere, digging a grave."

As of March 19, then, the ending went like this: Jake was being buried alive. He grabbed the blade of Sam's shovel and hit Sam with the wooden handle, so that Sam, according to the script, "tumbles back off the grave, down the hill—and into the rushing white waters of the aqueduct." Lest we think we have lost Holly at this point, she pops her head out of the grave and asks, "What happened?" Jake tells her. She says "Some party."

Melanie didn't love sticking her head out of the grave and saying "Some party." Brian registered her opinion somewhere behind his emotionless eyes; but he had his own concerns. The ending wasn't scary enough for him. It didn't have just the right blood-curdling shocker right before the closing frames. De Palma movies don't end with lines like works of literature; come on! What he needed was a visual punch in the mouth. Carrie's hand suddenly reaching out of the grave grabbing Amy Irving and the audience by the heart. Aghhhhh!

At dailies the week of March 19, the news leaked out that Holly was not going to end up in the grave.

What do you mean, Holly doesn't end up in the grave?!

Brian didn't know what he meant yet.

Joe said "Wait and see," absolutely confident that the director would come up with something dazzling. Howard Gottfried, whose job it was to guard the movie's money, could have scared himself with visions of what Brian might or might not do . . . but he didn't; not with De Palma; De Palma owned too much of this movie and was too shrewd a businessman to drive the budget haywire with some last-minute cinematic excess.

On the afternoon of March 23, right before the company headed for a long night's shoot at the aqueduct, everyone found out what Brian had decided. Just as Jake and Sam are locked in their struggle to the death on the edge of the aqueduct, THE

DOG would appear howling and gnawing and crashing through the windows of the Indian's truck. This dog would leap at Jake. Aghhhhh! Jake would duck. The dog would hit the Indian, now revealed by his slipping makeup to be Sam Bouchard now revealed by the appearance of his dog to be Alex Revelle. And both Revelle and the dog would go plunging into the aqueduct.

Now that's the way to use an aqueduct.

"So now we need a Kamakazi dog," muttered Joe Napolitano.

Ida Random contemplated the news that the dog would have to leap through the windows of the truck with the comment that this new twist would require a major set. Not that she wasn't ready to have it built. But it was a consideration. The fight would be staged at the aqueduct site on location. There we would see the dog jump out of the window of the truck.

The trick was that the window itself would not be in the truck when the dog went through. The truck was fitted with special breakaway windows, and not until the last minute did Joe find out that these windows would not be in the truck at the location but rather saved for the double of the scene to be shot on the sound stage later on. There under the careful control of the special effects experts, the dog would be filmed gnashing and clawing and finally crashing through the truck window.

Mike Seeman, the sound cable man, recalled that to shoot the dog jumping through the window of the truck (a Bronco), Brian needed two dogs—"one for snarling and showing his teeth and barking, the other for leaping, depending on the individual dog's talents."

First the window glass was removed from the truck. Then the dog leaped through. Then the window was covered with a Saran Wrap–like material and the dog leaped through. Then the window was covered with "sugar glass," a harmless substitute. The dog hit it and backed off. His trainer coached and called and finally he leaped through. This series of events was

repeated for many takes, a laborious and difficult process, made even more difficult by the necessity to "make up" these nice dogs so that they looked ferocious. One of the dogs was fitted with false teeth—Dusty Blauvelt, the first assistant cameramen, called it the "Snarl-o-Matic" bridge because it raised the dog's cheeks. The dog that leaped through the window threatened to take his trainer's arm off when the bridge was fitted in his mouth. So the scene ended up with the more docile dog doing the big snarl and his double the big leap.

To divert the water at the aqueduct for five hours cost about $18,000. To repair the hole in the sound stage that had to be made when the aqueduct location was doubled indoors cost $22,000. But with all the hours it took to get those two dogs to do their scene right, it was certainly more economical to work on the stage.

That the idea was brilliant, no one doubted.

That it was also late set some of the company on edge. It was late enough to decide on such a huge location as the aqueduct as a major exterior set. It was very late to decide to build the aqueduct, leaf for leaf, shovelful for shovelful, as a major constructed set in the sound stage. But it seemed to be a part of Brian De Palma's style to leave questions open as long as possible, thereby making people a little nervous and commanding their fullest attention.

Joe Napolitano, having worked with Brian before, had learned to "roll with the punches."

He recalled that right before they started to shoot *Blow Out*, Brian had changed the whole ending of the picture—adding the fireworks, the parade. By comparison the change in the ending of *Body Double* was much more manageable. "It's not like we suddenly need sixty extras," he said. "This change isn't going to alter anybody's needs for the day of shooting. My main responsibility is to keep things moving, to make sure that if

people need something, they can prepare. It's their job; they want to do it well. They don't want to arrive at a location only to find they don't have something they needed. But with this, nothing has changed but the story so I'm not going to run around telling everybody Brian has a new ending because I really don't have to."

Brian's continual improving on yesterday's ideas happened almost in passing—while driving to a location, while meeting up at his house, while driving home from dailies. Constant little meetings, like snacks. The actors would give him ideas; or Ida; or Steve. Jim Tanenbaum, the sound mixer who had worked with Brian on *Phantom of the Paradise*, remembered: "The Phantom sneaks up on Gerrit Graham who's taking a shower à la *Psycho* and of course the Phantom is going to threaten Gerrit with a knife, but at the last minute somebody came up with the idea of a toilet plunger so then they improvised this scene where the Phantom clamps a toilet plunger over Gerrit's mouth."

Who got that idea?!

Oh . . . just somebody.

Brian changed the location for the chase that leads up to the climax of *Body Double* when Joe, Ida, and Steve just happened to pass by a better alternative.

Originally it was to be a car chase down the freeway.

This posed some problems.

"We were going to have to own a freeway for three nights," Joe said, "and it seemed like an awful lot of work and an awful lot of money to not make such an important point. So Brian thought about the freeway and he said, well, maybe instead it's a road up in the hills someplace, like on Mulholland Drive. And Ida and Steve and I were coming back from dropping Brian off at his house and I said 'Hey! Look at this!' and we pulled over and looked." There on Mulholland Drive, a soaring, circuitous road passing high into the Hollywood Hills above Los Angeles,

was a wide, level outswelling, almost a cul de sac, before the road meandered onward.

This location had several advantages.

It overlooked the L.A. lights below, tying in with the previous scene in which Holly Body walks out on Jake only to be picked up by the Indian.

It tied in better to Gloria's House, which was also located in the steep and dramatic Hollywood Hills, and Sam's House from which Jake would run after Holly and the Indian.

From a pragmatic point of view, the location was wide enough so that Brian could bring up his company's trucks and lighting equipment, his extras and special effects people and police cars and fire engines, and still allow traffic to pass between takes. He did not have to "own" the location for three nights, as would have been the case with the freeway. He could share it for two nights, which was much cheaper.

The scene to be shot in this new location was a car accident and the beginnings of a desperate chase up to the aqueduct. One of those scenes, Joe Napolitano noted, where you come around a corner, and poof, Armageddon.

In a rather typical De Palma program, the scene was preceded by something funny.

Before the accident and the big chase in *Body Double*, we see Holly Body limp and stumble in her six-inch heels out of the observation-tower house in a great huff. She has had it. This guy told her he was a producer and she is such a dumbhead, she bought the whole line, she's never going to listen to anybody who tells her she has a terrific smile again, "I should have known he was a fake when he didn't know what a fucking come shot was," mumble mumble grumble grumble goes Melanie Griffith. Clomp clomp stumble stumble go her six-inch heels. This has got to be the most deserted road I have ever been on in my life! Melanie ad-libs, where's a car for God's sakes?

A car comes. And doesn't pick her up.

Hey hey hey, she yells, as another car passes her by, and another, and another. This is already too much for Holly. Melanie stumbles and sniffles and whines, making it up as she goes along, she has no idea how long the camera is going to run, so she just keeps hitching. You people are sick in this town! she shrieks at the next car that passes. God! How can you not pick up a girl when she's by herself on the most deserted road in Los Angeles?! She takes off her shoes finally. If I'd had any sense I would have known about him, gold chains around his neck, fucking coke spoon doesn't even go in his nose, "you've got a terrific smile," how could I be so stupid? Another car passes. "YOU FAGGOT! Do I stop here, Brian, or do I keep going?" Two cars pass her, racing; up ahead there's a crash; a boom; the water running down the steep road glitters . . . oh my, says Holly, seeing the terrible accident up ahead. And the Indian pulls up in his truck. Holly is so frustrated at having been ignored before now that she wails and flails and rails at the Indian. "Get in the car," the Indian says.

"It was the first time I knew the Indian talked," Gregg Henry laughed. And we have also spent a few moments laughing. Whatever happens now (poof! Armageddon), we're not prepared for it.

The disarming laugh before the hair-raising denouement certainly didn't originate with De Palma. Everybody does it who knows how much easier it is to scare a happy, unsuspecting crowd than a tense, prepared crowd. Before Jaws rocks the boat and ultimately eats the captain, we get kibbitzing from Richard Dreyfuss in the galley. Before Carrie goes to the prom and blows everyone there to hell, we get three comic teenage boys trying to rent tuxedos. One of the funniest pre-Armageddon bits Brian ever pulled was in *Sisters*. The heroine (Jennifer Salt) is a nosy newspaper reporter determined to find out who stabbed to

death a man who wrote "Help" in his own blood on the window of the apartment across the courtyard from her apartment. So this nosy woman has gone to Canada, to the loony bin where her prime suspect (Margot Kidder, playing both halves of a Siamese twin set) spent a psychotic youth attached at the hip to her sister. We have already watched one man bloodily murdered. The music and the atmosphere of the loony bin suggest that any minute, our heroine will walk into the knife. If only she can get to the telephone and call for help.

She grabs the phone.

A red-haired woman with wild eyes snatches it away from her.

OhmyGod, another psychopath!

I wouldn't try using the telephone if I were you, says the red-haired woman in an unctuous tone. It could be dirty. It could have germs on it. (She is wiping the telephone with feeling.) It could make you sick. It could make you sick! THAT'S HOW I GOT SO SICK! SOMEBODY CALLED ME ON THE TELEPHONE!

Even today, if you see *Sisters* and you've seen it before and you know what's going to happen and you're not scared any more, you still laugh at this little scene. The deathlessness of some of De Palma's comedy has caused some people to wonder why he does not try scaring us for an appetizer and amusing us for the big meal instead of the other way around.

But comedy is a minor craft in De Palma's hierarchy of arts. It is algebraic; a theorem that works, every time; within it, Melanie might get to be creative; but for Brian De Palma, it is a simple matter of cause and effect.

So now comes the big meal: the accident. The Indian and Holly drive up to the accident; hit a roadblock; cops; fire fighters; big traffic jam. Jake too gets stuck at the accident, on his way to see Detective McLean. In the midst of the traffic jam, he sees

the Indian reach over and wham Holly unconscious with an iron bar. The Indian pulls off into the woods. Jake races after him. A cop stops him; Jake has to beat up the cop to get away and save Holly. Jake leaps a high fence and follows the Indian.

To shoot the accident scene and the chase up Mulholland, the *Body Double* company arrived at their location at about five in the afternoon and worked through the night until dawn messed up their light and they had to go home.

All manner of cars with extras driving gathered in a choreographed crush. Emergency vehicles screamed and flashed. Fire fighter extras in their hottest yellow slickers hauled their shiniest hoses; police extras circulated in their crowd control mode. "I wanted all the cops in motorcycle outfits," Joe said. "Because motorcycle cops wear high boots, shiny leather, and shiny leather jackets and shiny helmets. At night those things look better. Everything's flashy. We wet down the street, get the leather boots working, the whole scene comes to life. . . ."

A wrecked car had been brought in, disemboweled, daubed with flat black paint to appear burned and then rolled over on its side like a dead thing. It was nothing, a piece of junk; but the scene drank lifeblood from this wreck.

Next to the car, the special effects people lay a long pipe with holes in it. This pipe connected to a propane pump off camera. They had only to light the propane and fire would spurt from the holes in the pipe, looking to us as though it were spurting from the car. If Brian wanted, the flames could burn sixty feet in the air.

Another pump was planted to make it appear that the car had hit a water main, sending a jet of spray high in the air.

Behind the wrecked car, with its simulated fire and water main break, the trees were lit blood red. The street itself was watered down between takes, so it would shine, augmenting the

glare of the extras, the cars, the warning flares which the props department repeatedly relit between takes.

It was freezing. Margaret Nelson, the Directors' Guild trainee who worked the movie as though she were an assistant director, had mittens and a ski hat. Hair stylist Marlene Williams huddled in her Alpine down vest and Barbara Guedel, the feisty makeup lady, dispatched tissues for all the running noses. De Palma himself was outfitted like Paul Bunyan, in sheepskin parka and thick gray socks and waterproof mud boots. He sat on the back of the camera car, massive as a mountain and somehow not as serious as usual. Working with Brian was not under any circumstances a laugh riot, but everybody could see that he was extra pleased tonight. "This is a big shot," he murmured. Fires. Stuntmen. Geysers. Sirens. This is what makes Brian content. He knew the Mulholland Drive sequence would eventually play as a speeding roller coaster of suspense. So he took it in stride while everything that could possibly happen to slow up "the big shot" happened.

One night on Mulholland, it rained altogether and they had to go home without half a day's shooting.

On another occasion, all the street lights suddenly died. They were powered by an automatic sensor and now, because so much ancillary light was coming from the movie, the sensor thought daylight had arrived and ordered the lights to stop shining. Tim Griffith, the gaffer, rode up and down the hill on his bike, linking the generators below with the men above. His electricians went up in their cherry pickers to try to put a piece of tape over the sensor. But they sailed perilously close to the high tension wires, and finally had to call for help from the city power authority.

The cops who worked with the film, controlling traffic, were stationed so far up and down the road that the sound crew had to wire them with mikes so they could communicate with Joe

Napolitano. Bobby Yannetti, the second AD, got crazed in the midst of this massive shot with all its inherent communication problems because he could not find his fog horn. But since there was so much waiting while the lights were rerigged, Jim Tanenbaum, the wise and affable sound mixer, had time to shoot home and bring back two fog horns from his personal supply.

The cold wore the crew down. Their feet got wet from the cascades of water sprayed by a big gray truck to keep the street shiny. Then special effects turned on the smoke machine and everybody began choking. By the time Brian finally did a couple of takes, it was time to eat.

"Lunch" was served around 10:30 P.M. out of catering trailers and consumed at long tables set up in the street. The food may have been too heavy for this time of night, but at least it was hot. Since cast and crew took precedence over extras, they went to the head of the line. The steak was too tough to cut with the little plastic knives provided. Experienced grips and electricians and sound men pulled out their own personal steel blades. "On *Rumblefish*," Steve Burum recalled, "we sat down to eat with linen tablecloths and china plates. We had 67 nights of shooting and it was the only time during the working hours that we felt like human beings." Burum had worked on three Coppola movies—*Rumblefish*, *The Outsiders*, and *Apocalypse Now*—and swore it was a very effective way to keep the crew happy and loyal, "so that when you needed to squeeze the extra minute out of them, they were with you and ready to help." But this tale seemed to his listeners like another example of the kind of Coppola extravagance which had led to the demise of Zoetrope Studios, whose sets and props were currently being auctioned off ignominiously.

Just at lunchtime, Howard Gottfried appeared. He had the producer's flare for showing up exactly when it would be

possible to see what was going on without interrupting the shoot. Howard came also to provide comic relief and fatherly affection to the tired crew. He mimicked Humphrey Bogart. "So how's it going, shweetheart?" he would say to Emmett Brown, the droll key grip. "Hanging in there, Yóssele?" he would ask Joe Napolitano. He threw an arm around Steve Burum. "Look at all this water, look at all this spray, is it *ever* wet enough for these cinematographers?"

Lunch ended quickly. They went back to shooting. They went back to waiting. Where's the water truck? Why isn't it here spraying? How much longer could traffic be held up? Could the guy in the Datsun who has been waiting so long that his girl friend may have given him up for good finally be allowed to pass? Where's Melanie?

She's in her trailer thawing.

Bring Melanie back.

Can she . . . ?

Yes, she can wear her baby blue leg warmers. Her legs won't show in the shot.

"Stand by to stand by," said Rimas Tumasonis, the sound boom operator. Himself, he put his feet up and smoked his pipe.

Tani Cohen showed up around 1:00 A.M. which meant that the weary Camilla could go home.

"Don't fall out of eye contact with the master," Brian said. And Tani hovered close by, ever ready with the blue thermos and his cigarettes.

They did takes. "Gotta move faster sooner," Joe Napolitano instructed, his amplified voice booming across the huge location. "We're going again quickly, please, keep those flares burning." More takes. Melanie's hair wilted. Marlene sprayed back its pinnacles. More takes. The camera moved and reset for Craig's big run, which took some time, so Emmett Brown, the key grip,

told his "life story." When he was a little boy in Mississippi, he said, his parents separated and his Momma was real poor and couldn't afford to keep her little boys but she was afraid to send them to foster homes because they might be adopted and brought to *California!* So she told the authorities they were bad little boys and had run away from home and thereby had them put in a reformatory. And Emmett had to wear a chain with a bell around his leg but his little brother was so skinny and scrawny that the chain fell off so they sent him to the peewee farm. It was just a little white lie his Momma told, said Emmett, chomping his cigar and twinkling. Just to keep them out of California.

Rimas Tumasonis said he started out to be an actor. When he graduated from acting school, he discovered that the theater was dying. While he was in the theater, he discovered that the world was dying. So he became a sound man, moved to Vancouver, and took up pipe smoking.

You had to keep laughing. It was the only way to get through the long night.

Two days later, at dailies, nobody was laughing.

Because the footage from Mulholland Drive had a flicker in it.

Take after take rolled across the screen in the small, elegant projection room at Columbia Pictures, and the flicker was always there.

Disaster.

The camera crew, Joe, Ida, their silent director watched with baleful faces, like doctors who have checked every X ray and still see a terrible shadow on the lungs. "We can't go back there and reshoot, we can't, we can't . . ." Howard Gottfried mumbled to no one in particular.

Steve Burum was furious.

"We were doing very well," he said calmly. "We go up to Mulholland Drive and then it rains on us. We lose half a night.

But we are not daunted. The next night we come back and we're so efficient that we finish up in the allotted two nights. And today we find out we have a flicker in the first day's stuff!''

The source of the flicker was a big light called an HMI.

''HMI lights do not work like ordinary globes,'' Steve explained, ''where a filament heats up and incandesces and burns as a steady light. These HMI lights pulse. They cycle, go off and on, sixty times a second. The shutter on the camera is going at a sixtieth of a second. If they're not synchronized, if either the light or the camera doesn't blink exactly at the right time, you get a lack of density in the picture because the shutter's open and there's no flash of light.

''So what happened was that the generators we had were not running on 60 cycles, they fluctuated. We don't know why yet. We have what are called frequency meters that the guys check all the time, and it's like any other mechanical thing, sometimes they won't run. The guys can't look at them twelve hours a night. We checked it; it had been running on sixty cycles; it was okay. Our regular set of generators was okay. But the spare set we got for this big shot were not running on sixty cycles.

''The thing that makes me so angry is that when I called the laboratory in the morning to check on these very dailies, the people who looked at them should have said; 'You have a problem with HMI flicker.' At that time I would have said 'Oh my God' and I would have called Tim Griffith, the gaffer, and we would have changed generators for tonight. But we didn't find out about it until four in the afternoon . . .'' And the night's shooting had already been rigged for; the generators, both the good and the defective, were already in place. This meant that at the last minute, Griffith's lighting staff was running around pulling the defective generators off the next location and replacing them with a good set.

Ultimately the flicker would be edited down so as to be unnoticeable to the public by Gerry Greenberg, the film's editor, who was collecting Brian's preferred footage in New York and already piecing it together. "What flicker?" Greenberg would say blankly three months later in New York. "Oh! That! I didn't edit it out, I just didn't edit it in." He laughed. "Often something that makes forty people want to commit suicide on the set means nothing by the time it gets to us in the editing room."

Jim Tanenbaum had extremely long brown hair and a gentle beard and gentle eyes. He wore an LAPD cap and huddled behind his sound kit under his headphones, taking up only about the same amount of space as a manicurist. Like a manicurist, he could roll himself and his gear all over the shop. Tanenbaum had two assistants who ranged out before him like investigatory antennae; Rimas Tumasonis who worked the boom and Mike Seeman who dragged the cable. These three bearded, witty men were the intelligentsia of the *Body Double* set. They read books; toyed with philosophies; and from under their closed-circuit audio canopy, they heard everything. In a funny article in *American Film*, Tom McDonough ran through the film crew stereotypes and noted that "sound men tend to be high school science nerds triumphant," which was as true of Brian himself as of Tanenbaum, Tumasonis, and Seeman.

"On a movie shoot," said Tanenbaum, "there is a sort of system of upper and lower classes. The actors are definitely upper class. The extras are definitely lower class. The director of photography is upper class. And about everybody else on the crew tends to be lower class unless there is some specific contribution involved." (Eric Schwab, the location-hunting young production assistant, would fall into this category.) "I do not think that Brian hangs out with the crew like one of the boys.

But on *Phantom of the Paradise*, for example, he would certainly go out to dinner with the editor, the producer, some of the cast, and they would do whatever they do when they went out to dinner. I have no idea what they did. I never accompanied them."

This was Tanenbaum's way of saying that after working with Brian De Palma on two pictures, *Phantom of the Paradise* and *Blow Out*, he did not have a personal relationship with Brian De Palma. And in this, he was exactly like the great majority of people working on *Body Double*.

On *Phantom of the Paradise*, a low-budget independent mock-horror film made in 1973–74, Tanenbaum recalled that Brian "was quite withdrawn and many people thought that he was just a snob and stuck up. But in fact, that was not the case. Brian was just thinking ninety miles an hour in his own head and didn't pay much attention to the rest of the world because he didn't have time for it. On *Blow Out*, he was even more withdrawn. He was wearing a Sony Walkman most of the time. He even wanted to wear his Walkman when we were shooting, but the bleed from the ear pieces was not acceptable so he had to shut them off. I find him much more open and talkative on this movie than he was on the other two."

Tanenbaum's experience allowed him to put Brian's forbidding persona in perspective. But to those who had never worked with Brian before, he appeared as remote and unfriendly on *Body Double* as he had to Tanenbaum on *Phantom*. One crew member said: "He is the most inaccessible director I have ever worked with. Lately, there's been a big breakthrough. He sometimes says 'Hi' to me in the mornings." (Nancy Allen told a reporter that she was convinced that he did not like her at all when they worked together on *Carrie* because he never spoke to her. Apparently, she read the signs wrong.)

On any given day, Brian's mood filtered through the person of Joe Napolitano. "Assistant directors are head waiters, rude and tender by turns," quipped McDonough, the film folklorist; indeed Joe struck many crew members as a man only deceptively sweet. He could be hard and angry and demanding, and when he was, it was because Brian was. "They are both really bright men," said another crew member. "Joe wants to make everything good for Brian, he wants Brian to have exactly what he wants. And when Brian gets impatient, with error, with human frailty, that feeling gets passed down from him and Joe follows suit and the impatience filters out to the crew."

As a man isolated by his function, hearing the movie while everyone else was watching it, Tanenbaum understood better than most how a director might carry around in his head a whole world of foresight and imagination that bore little resemblance to the work at hand. "Brian can see it all before he shoots a foot of film," he said. "And he's so involved with that, he has so much going on in his head all the time that conversations, outside events disturb him, like the screech of a nail on a chalkboard. I have never seen him throw a tantrum; I don't think I have even really heard him yell. He's not into that sort of thing because I think he realizes it doesn't do any good. There would be times [on *Phantom*, he recalled] when he would come to me and ask me: do we hear this? do we hear that? I think that because he had not worked with me before, he was more worried with me on that show. Also he hadn't made as many movies then and was more worried in general, I suspect. But now he more or less trusts me to come to him if I have a problem, and if he doesn't hear from me, he knows the stuff is going to be okay. I have heard him tell people in other departments when he doesn't like what they are doing, and so I

assume he likes my aesthetic choices because he hasn't told me differently."

What success and fifteen movies made had brought Brian was a lot of Tanenbaums, a lot of tried, tested, trusted people whose work he did not have to second-guess. It made everything easier.

"You have to listen to the people you hire," Brian said, "because they're there to help you. And they have ideas and see things that you may miss. You have to listen to what the writers say and the producers and the DP and the actors because you're supposed to take all this material and meld it into something." Camilla Turnbull was an old friend from college days; she knew when to be there and she knew when to fade away. Gerry Greenberg had been the editor on *Dressed to Kill* and *Scarface*. "I can just talk to him on the phone," Brian said, "and he'll know exactly what I want. And can even do it better." Joe Napolitano was so accustomed to Brian's last-minute operational mode that he could soothe the nerves of nervous newcomers to the De Palma style. Brian testified: "I can leave all the arrangements to him." To hire Pino Donaggio, who had written the scores for *Carrie, Blow Out, Home Movies* (which Brian had made with some of his students at Sarah Lawrence and released in 1980), and *Dressed to Kill*, took maybe five minutes on the phone to Venice, Italy. Brian was on one extension, Howard Gottfried was on another.

"Hi, Pino, it's Brian De Palma, did I wake you up?" It was about midnight in Venice. "I'm making a new movie and I want you to write the music. Yes, I'll be able to show you the film in May and you'll do the score in July, August . . . Lots of disco. Morodor. Yes, yes . . . You're very happy? Good. Where should we send the script? *Dove, dove* the script?" Pino gave his address; Howard chortled silently. "*Uno, uno quattro*

. . . oh, *tre uno* . . . oh, *uno uno uno quattro* . . . right, you'll come to New York in May, see movie, go back to Italy, compose, then come back to New York and record in July. Who do we call for deal? *Questo?* Oh uh *chi*, right. Deal. Deal. Money. Right. *Avvocato?* Okay, *nome avvocato* . . . Ten, eleven million, *Dressed to Kill* size, we'll make good price, *buono prezzo,* how about the *nome* of the *avvocato*?'' Pino gave the name. He also named a price. ''$40,000?'' Brian looked at Howard who nodded, that was fine, they were budgeted for $40,000–50,000 for the composer, including his expenses. Brian laughed at something Pino said. ''Yeah. Erotica. Suspense. De Palma Donaggio Perfecto. Yes, very happy, Pino. Take care.''

Brian hung up. Howard stayed on the line and got some more details from Pino Donaggio. But essentially the deal was made.

For Ida Random, the production designer, Brian's taste and style were new territory. She had a director whom she did not know and he was a location fanatic and the pressure was on. But with the pressure came power, and Ida warmed to it, very quickly.

Ida was a vivacious blonde who had been born in Scotland, the daughter of an itinerant engineer. She had lived all over the world: South Africa, Brussels, Ireland, West Africa. She had gone to high school in Canada, done a year of art school, married an actor and moved to California. Eventually, her marriage ended, and now she was the sole support of her two teenage children and fairly typical of that race of contemporary superwomen produced by professional-liberation-with-minimal-domestic-relief.

Ida had been Stephen Grimes's assistant on *Urban Cowboy* and *True Confessions*, and had worked with Stu Campbell who she said taught her a lot about drafting. She was art director for

On Golden Pond. With Larry Kasdan's *The Big Chill*, she graduated to the top art job—production designer. She thought, probably correctly, that she might not have been Brian's very first choice for *Body Double*. "Of course everybody tries to get the biggest people and usually it whittles down to who you are going to go for next, and Brian liked *The Big Chill* and he's interested in people who are just starting. From what you read about him, you'd think he has it in for women, and I thought we wouldn't get along. But I found him easy to talk to and exchange ideas with. Brian told me, even if I look grumpy or angry, he said, talk to me, talk to me, talk to me whenever you want to, keep talking to me."

Ida found that Brian was not the sort of director you could come to and say, "Listen, I've found this terrific place." No, you had to show him. She brought Eric Schwab with her from *True Confessions* to be her assistant and he took location pictures. In the crowded trailer on the Columbia lot that Ida shared with Cloudia, the set decorator, and all the rest of the art department, there were piles and piles of pictures of interiors, exteriors, roads going to, roads going from, swatches of fabric for every chair and bedspread, masses of magazines like *Architectural Digest* and *House Beautiful* gutted for their pictures. Drafted elevations of all sets to be built hung on the walls. "Eric and Ida run around looking at places," Brian said. "They take pictures. And I take pictures. We decide on something that I like in the pictures. I don't go to locations unless I see pictures of them. If it doesn't look good in the pictures, it will not work in the movie."

Ida wore purple knee highs springing brightly above her chic boots, she wore white and tan serapes that flapped, skirts that swung; a woman in perpetual motion. She smoked long thin brown cigarettes and drove to and fro in her cluttered Mazda

between the locations and Stage 16 on the Columbia lot where *Body Double*'s sets were being built.

On Stage 16, dozens and dozens of strong, skilled men were constructing a replica of Sam's House, a replica of Gloria's House, and a "vampire graveyard" for the movie within the movie. Ida was swallowed up by the huge building; darting into rooms, poking around in crannies.

Where's Ida? somebody asked. "She's on the second floor of Gloria's House," answered a smug lumberjack type in a Nike T-shirt, "where the grip bit almost hit her. Heh heh."

In fact, such fellows had probably been waiting for a grip bit to hit Ida for many years. It was hard for a woman to get respect in a field so totally dominated by men. "When I was an assistant," she said, "every day was a test." Did she know? Could she do? Would she be caught in a technical error? Was she cool? "The one thing you can't do is scream and yell. When a man yells, he's angry. When a woman yells, she's hysterical, and they say, oh, she's just a hysterical woman, and you're dead."

Ida got respect from Brian. Few things were more important to him than the "look" of the movie. The story, even so important a character as Gloria, was understood by visual impact primarily. And one key to the impact of *Body Double* was the look of Los Angeles.

"I never think cities are really shot right," Brian said, "examined for architecturally interesting-looking places. I think if I'm the director, the picture has a sense of design. Spielberg has a real great sense of design. The places he picks are very unique, even though he deals with a sort of mid-American sense of the world. But L.A. is a faceless city. The views could double for so many things. You have to look at a movie like *Chinatown* to get a feeling of what L.A. is all about."

The design problem, then, was to make us recognize L.A.

"with a punch," as Ida said. Few buildings in the city "said" Hollywood. The Capitol Building. Grauman's Chinese Theater. Maybe Frederick's of Hollywood. It was a town of sprawling vistas and endless streets; because of the necessities of television, it had, as Brian said, doubled for everywhere; episodes might purport to have occurred in Dallas or Massachusetts or Nebraska, but they were all shot in L.A. Ida's task was to organize the components of the movie so as to focus the look of the city and make it seem replete. She divided the look into three elements.

"We have the Hollywood actor and that whole trip," she said, "the interviews, the frustration, the competition, the driving around. Then we have the adult porn world, it's a reality, it's part of life, you can either choose to ignore it and pretend it doesn't exist or you can show it. We're showing it. Then we go to rich Beverly Hills. The elite. The jet-setting. It's all Hollywood."

The "driving around" that Jake Scully does was photographed from the point of view of his car. Every building and intersection he traversed was photographed and laid out in horizontally patched panoramas on large white poster boards. These portable friezes were called drive-bys, diagrams for the shots that went by the same name.

In *Vertigo*, Jimmy Stewart is seen repeatedly sitting in his car, cruising the length and breadth of San Francisco. Viewed now, these scenes are most irritating, sometimes downright laughable. Obviously Stewart's "car" sits absolutely still; the scenery moving behind and around him is obviously movie footage being shot as background. *Body Double* did precisely the same thing, with improved technology.

Jake Scully had a beat-up turquoise Camaro convertible, with gray antirust paint spread over the front fender. This car had a double. While one car worked, the other could be rigged; saving money by saving time, insuring that all the shots with the

Camaro in one location could be finished before the light changed and interfered with the matching.

Sometimes an over-the-shoulder shot of Jake driving was needed. In that case, a camera was rigged in the back seat of one Camaro, shooting Jake in the front seat.

Sometimes we needed to see Jake as he drove toward us. In that case, he would be pretending to drive one car and the other would be towing him and carrying the camera crew.

Drive-bys were shot from a car that was moving so as to simulate Jake's point of view. The footage of the scenery that he passed was then projected, à la *Vertigo*, on a screen in the studio. Then Jake was placed in front of it, with his car, pretending to drive. Both elements were then shot together to give us our final version.

This technique had been perfected since the days of Alfred Hitchcock. It was now called a process plate.

"If Jake is driving down a street," Joe Napolitano explained, "and you have a close-up of him in a car, you shoot from the back of the camera car so you have film of what it looks like behind Jake while he is driving. (If you want to show the scenery he is passing, you shoot from the side of the car, etc.) Then you go into the studio and you run that film on a rear projection screen. It projects the plate that you have shot. And you put Jake in his car in the foreground, and because you're in the studio and he's not moving, you can control the way he is lit. And he pretends he's driving and it looks exactly like ne's driving down the street."

The process plates were often shot by a second unit, roaming the streets of Los Angeles, to put on film the chains of still pictures on the drive-by boards in Ida's office. One of them, for example, was the scene in which the Indian's Bronco pulls in front of Gloria's MG into the Rodeo Collection, to be followed by the MG and Jake's Camaro. In terms of scheduling, these

process shots served as a good cover set. If it rained and the company had no place else to go, and the process footage was ready, they could all move into the sound stage and shoot the process.

Process plates provided a key element in what Ida labeled the first third of her "Hollywood 1984" look—the endless, weary cruising of the rejected actor.

They also helped the movie handle its sex.

When Jake and Gloria appear to be making love on the beach outside the tunnel, the background was shot separately as a process plate. "The steamy stuff," as Joe put it, "was shot in the studio where you can give your actors some privacy."

Brian wanted to blend Jake's feelings about Gloria into the scene in which Jake is making love to Holly. But Holly is a working girl who makes sex movies and Jake is really having sex with her; Gloria was a rich, remote Beverly Hills matron now dead, and Jake never had sex with her. How does Brian say that Jake feels like he is making dream love to Gloria when he is making real love to Holly? Which woman is this? Whose body is this? How can Jake's confusion be visualized?

First, the feeling had to be decided on. Brian likes to portray attraction between men and women as dizziness. He did that in *Carrie*. Also in *Obsession*. People touch and the world goes round and round. This is such an old idea that you can't believe such a progressive techie as Brian is actually going to use it; but wait.

The shot begins with Jake making love to Holly. Around and around they go. "The camera gets in real close," said Steve Burum. "Jake's head goes in front, and then you cut, and now, Holly is gone and Jake is with Gloria."

Now if this is your goal, to switch women inside a man's imagination on a physical turn of his head, you need to shoot both backgrounds separately, without lovers. So Brian shot the

grungy X-rated movie studio background, and the camera rolled around and around, 360 degrees. He shot the beach background; the camera rolled around and around 360 degrees. He took the footage of the movie studio and projected it as a process plate on screens in the sound stage, while Melanie and Craig stood in front of it and embraced on a turntable. So the background is turning. And the principals are turning. And the movie studio turns into the beach as Melanie turns into Deborah.

"Every time you have a revolution," Brian said, "you have a revelation." We turn as Jake Scully turns, as the image in his mind turns. We see what he sees. We see what he thinks he sees. We see what he feels. "Making movies is really very simple and logical," Steve Burum commented. "The best trick is the simplest trick."

The "porn part" of the Los Angeles look depended as much upon extras as locations. Jim Tanenbaum was mildly surprised when he arrived on the set for the scene in which Jake Scully is interviewed by a producer and cast in an adult film.

"In the script it says that Jake goes into the producer's office and the producer asks him a couple of questions, asks him to read a line, asks him to take his clothes off, and then says okay, you're hired. That's all it says in the script. Well. When I get on the set, suddenly I see the producer's office has a glass window. And here is an entire movie stage with a porno movie being filmed in the background while this simple scene is going on. Well.

"Of course to see the bathroom sluts and all the rest of that stuff going on, I find fascinating."

This willful distraction of the viewer from the scene by flailing, sweating, heaving bodies in the background was a De Palma signature, part of the endless delight he seemed to take in letting us know he knew we couldn't help looking at a naked lady. At the very same time, we are reminded that De Palma

himself, mirrored in heroes from De Niro to Travolta to Craig Wasson, was totally unmoved by naked ladies, else why would he use them as scenery to be disregarded, passed in front of and ignored like some flesh-colored condo you drive by and never need to notice in Los Angeles?

The "vampire graveyard" and the "bat motel" were sets for the movie within a movie at the beginning of *Body Double*, softcore promotions for the hardcore world Jake Scully was slowly entering. On the stage, the graveyard was built on a high platform, the vampire's grave cut out of its side. It was a kind of black satin nest in which Jake would be seized with immobilizing claustrophobia; lest he get too comfortable in there, it had lots of itchy velour inlaid. The side of the platform out of which this grave had been carved was faced with textured paint colored to create the feeling of a geological cross section. On top of the platform was the graveyard. It had a tough-looking angel with scabrous wings. It also had a small stone that said "Here lie the remains of Lynn Price." (Lynn Price was the scenic chargeman whose responsibility it was to build the sets for *Body Double*.)

Behind the graveyard hung a stationary background, painted like a stage set, with a big, ugly, yellow sun and some silhouetted trees. "We're gonna have mist over the sun," Ida said happily, "and some moss and all kinds of stuff happening, and of course, the set's gonna go on fire . . ."

The bat motel, where the vampire would make bloody love to a pretty woman and we would see that she was only pretty from the neck up, she needed a body to substitute on the pan down, had to be a particularly punky, sleazy place, requiring punky, sleazy extras. "When we were scouting locations," Joe said, "we saw this girl going around in a pink Corvette. With blonde hair. She's a famous person here in L.A. She even has a billboard with her picture on it—Angeline. I want her for the

bat motel. I want the pink Corvette and that blonde in that car because I want to make a statement. It's the first shot in the movie, where we have all these punk people, motorcycle freaks and all that, it's very L.A. Where can you go in the United States and see a pink Corvette? It sort of sets the tone for the movie. If I can't get Angeline, I'll put another blonde in the car, who she is doesn't matter. It's the pink Corvette with the blonde with the big red lips, that's what I want, you know what I'm saying?'' Joe usually got what he wanted, but he did not in the end get Angeline.

When Jake Scully is searching for Holly Body, he comes to Tower Video, which displays its tapes in purple cases labeled by genre. Children. Horror. Western. The salesman, played by Douglas Warhit, is as wise to the weird needs of porn lovers as Brian De Palma purports to be. (Warhit continues a long tradition of calm, friendly, rather superior geeks in Brian's movies. Often experts in some high-tech field like psychokinetics or do-it-yourself computers, they are reminders of Brian when he was young, always on the outside looking in; almost heroes.) With easygoing irony, Warhit leads Craig back to the adult movie room, where some other guys are already browsing. ''I wouldn't put an 18-year old kid with long hair who looks like he lives in Laurel Canyon in Tower Video buying an adult tape,'' Joe said. ''What I did put there was middle-class, polyester types.''

For the jet-setting part of Hollywood, *Body Double* did Spago.

Spago is a very famous restaurant near Tower Video on Sunset Boulevard, made so by its chef, Wolfgang Puck, who invented ''nouvelle cuisine California.'' This, explained Bill Rosenfield of the *Body Double* production office, is nouvelle cuisine with avocado. (Rosenfield, a witty young man who had journeyed in from his native New York for this job, had perfected many other ways of directing displaced New Yorkers in

L.A. West is toward China, he said. East is toward home.) Jake Scully takes Holly Body to Spago after plying her with some drinks at Voilà because he wants to show her that even as a producer of hardcore pictures, he still mixes with the beautiful people in the beautiful places.

At 3:30 in the morning at Spago, the *Body Double* company was about to wind up a long night of shooting. The extras were falling off their feet. The more experienced arrived with their own folding chairs, knowing they would have to wait around for hours. Spago itself provided a glittering setting: it had white lattice chairs with pale purple pillows, immaculate white tablecloths, immaculate white chefs behind a long counter of crisp salads and spare entrees at the ready to be picked up by the waiters and waitresses the minute Joe Napolitano would call action. In huge pink vases, there were enormous sprays of forsythia and lilies with wingspans measuring five feet. The waitresses wore red and white striped shirts and tan satin bows and black skirts and high heels. A Burt Reynolds double sat at a table along with Malgosia Matteo, stand-in for both Deborah and Melanie. In this scene she might finally appear in the movie.

The ceiling was exposed-beam unfinished wood, which the crew had studded with lights of vastly higher wattage than Spago was accustomed to, and the lights seared the wood with their heat, and by 4:00 A.M. the whole place smelled faintly like a campsite. While the crew reset for the last shot, the exhausted extras gathered in a room at the back around a radiant heater brought in especially to warm them; lovely girls in dreamlike trances, handsome young men catching winks like commuters on graveyard subway shifts.

But there was a problem.

The extras weren't right.

The critical element in the scenery had not been added to fit the location, and Joe Napolitano was having a bad night.

"Spago was a disaster," he explained later. "I told the extra casting people: go up and see what types hang out at Spago; it's a place where movie people hang out, where everybody's got a deal. And half the fifty or sixty people they sent me were too old! They were dressed totally wrong! I took Ida back to look at them. I took Gloria, the costume designer, back to look at them. Even Brian went back to look at them. We got on the phone and made some calls, got some really hot-looking chicks in there with designer clothes. I even used Bill Rosenfield, because he looked more like a young studio executive than anybody else."

When extras looked wrong to Joe, he would put them right in front of the lens so they would pass by quickly and we wouldn't notice them. But the ones who looked like the Beautiful People he placed right behind where the actors would be talking. One of them was Steven (Rocky) Bauer, Melanie's husband, summoned from home on an emergency basis.

The props master, Horst Grandt, and the script supervisor, Wilma Garscadden-Gahret, consulted at a table off-camera, surveying the room that had been set and reset and reset since 5:30 P.M. yesterday with plates and wine glasses, half-filled, filled; ashtrays, half-filled, filled; clean napkins; used napkins; half-eaten salads; new salads; a bottomless pit of props and yet more minor props. They worried together about the matching. Was that glass half-filled on the last shot? Was that man smoking? "I have never been so tired in my life," Horst said. It was now 4:30 in the morning.

Brian sat outside with the camera operator, Doug Ryan, high up on the long neck of a crane. They would shoot Jake and Holly at Spago through the window, panning the glittering crowd. Brian communicated with Joe over a walkie-talkie; his rough voice pierced the walls like Captain Video's

opticon scalameter. "Okay, Melanie. Stand up. Put on the jacket. Look out the window. Go." She did that. The camera shot that. "Very good, actors," said Brian through the wall. In contrast to the crowded, tense location inside Spago, the exhausted extras, the exhausted dishes and salads and crew, Brian was in the clear, calm night above Sunset. He was not exhausted. The crane went up and down, a mechanical swan stretching, and Brian was part of the swan, riding the air, kind of like Zeus about to get acquainted with Leda. Behind him, across Sunset, the movie billboards seemed as thin and unsubstantial as stage flats. These were the walls of L.A. Temporary. Like success. Like failure. Like which restaurant was chic this year and which studio executive would survive until next year. No wonder capturing the look of Los Angeles was such a feat and a problem. Its look self-destructed in a twinkling. *Chinatown* was the look of its past, *Blade Runner* the look of its future. *Body Double* was the look of now.

However, since Brian De Palma was on the outside looking in, he had only to turn his head to be reminded that beyond the billboards of Sunset, there was absolutely nothing.

In New York in June during the edit, Greenberg eliminated almost the entire scene at Spago in the first trimming of fat from the film, and Voilà and Spago blended together like they were one restaurant, and most of the props and salads and extras—including Bill Rosenfield, Malgosia, and the Burt Reynolds double—were never seen. (Steven Bauer did appear elsewhere in *Body Double*, however, as an assistant director who becomes Holly Body's opening-credit conquest in *Holly Does Hollywood*.)

"I think there's some law," Brian said, "that new art forms tend to ape old art forms. For instance, television is like radio. It's basically a word form. Go home and black out the picture sometime and see if you've missed anything.

"Movies started out silent. That's when they were a pure form. But then they began photographing plays and worrying about how you deal with dialogue, and they put cards on the screen, and when sound came, it all went out the window.

"A lot of European directors developed a more visual style because their movies were basically shot without sound. They looped everything. They used people talking but the words were not intrinsic to the concept.

"It hit me about twenty years ago—I was watching a Hitchcock movie—that cinema is the only art form in which you show the information to the viewer and the characters simultaneously. You show this . . ."—he holds up a fork—". . . and then cut to me. You the audience have seen exactly what I have seen. It's the point of view shot, and it's unique to cinema. You have communicated to the audience information in its most basic form, without any transitional thing to go through. . . . You haven't told them a story; you haven't shown them a painting; you haven't described something to them. You have shown them an exact replica of what your characters see.

"No, it's not a replica.

"It is . . . it.

"The point of view shot is a basic building block of cinema. Like sound is to music. The essential element of the form."

Therefore, if you are Brian De Palma, you don't build movies around people saying things.

"You build movies," he concluded, "around people seeing things."

Body Double is built around Jake Scully seeing Gloria Revelle. The whole story hinges on what he sees.

He sees her body—but often it's a fake; it's really Holly's body.

He sees her murderer. But her murderer is in disguise; he's really her husband.

But Gloria's House is not a fake. It is a true expression of the kind of woman she is and the desperate situation she is in. It is the focusing location for Jake's passion. If we can create the right house, then we can know not Gloria (for she is surely more than her house and the rest of her is largely fake), but our hero, Jake. We can understand by seeing this house from his point of view what he yearns for. And that makes the story happen—a man yearning. That makes the movie happen—a man seeing. It is also how—without giving up the stance and invulnerable persona of an outsider looking in—Brian writes his autobiography.

Five different locations made up what we would come to know as Gloria's House.

The house itself, a high white rounded structure, stood up on the hills off Miller Drive.

The gate to Gloria's House was on Los Feliz Boulevard. Here Jake would see her drive nervously toward her shopping trip at the Rodeo Collection and, catching a glimpse of the Indian about to follow her, would be frustratingly stalled in his pursuit by some sweating gardeners trying to clear debris and foliage off the road.

The road leading up to Gloria's House was on Mulholland Drive. Here Jake would accost the joggers on his way to try and save her from being drilled to death by the Indian.

The interiors of Gloria's House were shot at a replica built on Stage 16 at the Burbank Studios (known at TBS). This house double had no top, so that lights and camera could be rigged above it. Its walls and furnishings could be rigged and rehung so that we might see the top floor with its bedrooms, the bottom floor with its ferocious dog, and combinations thereof. Around this replica hung giant curving metal frames, suspended from the towering ceiling. A projection of the entire scenic surroundings of the house on Miller Drive would be shot and made into a

huge still picture projected on screens that hung from these metal riggings. Thus, even when we were seeing action shot in the replica, the view from the windows would be identical to the one we would have seen if we had been standing in the house on Miller Drive. Here in this constructed replica, we would see Holly doing her masturbation routine for Jake's voyeuristic entertainment; and we would see Gloria being killed.

There was also another house, never to be seen in the film itself, from which Jake Scully views Gloria's house. It was situated across a small valley from the Miller Drive house and had a pleasant wrap-around terrace. The company called it the "Telescope House," for it provided the point of view vantage of Jake looking through the telescope.

The real telescope was in Sam's House, a tall phallic affair on another hill altogether. To give us the impression that Sam's House was related geographically to Gloria's House, Brian ordered a Panaflex sweep of the Los Angeles lights that was supposed to fly us from one house to the other, to make us feel that we were running with Jake toward Gloria. This one optical would cost *Body Double* about $27,000. Unfortunately, someone in special effects had not pulled the right switch, and the Los Angeles lights turned out to look like billions of multicolored spermatazoa swimming very slowly through mineral oil.

"It's awful, worthless, God, it goes on forever!" Brian exclaimed at dailies. "Forget it. Scrap the shot. Onward."

For Ida Random and her assistants, the trick in finding the right house for Gloria was to incorporate the right angles of seeing for Jake. "The movie was originally set in New York," Brian said, "and after living out here for a while, I realized you look down on the houses below you. I wanted to shoot down looking at the house rather than go with the straight-across look you experience in Manhattan."

Ida and Eric looked everywhere for the house Brian wanted.

They took hundreds and hundreds of pictures. "He said he wanted a house with curves," Ida remembered. "Like, let's make this a feminine house. It's her money. It's her house." But to find a curving house up on a hill, with the right views, and accessible, seemed more and more impossible. "Ultimately, these houses you have on a hill, all the views are facing out, right?" Ida said. "So you're looking from one house down to another one and usually you just see the bad part of the house, or you can't see anything at all. So we finally found this house on the top of a hill, twisted at an angle, so you can see into the living room. It had beautiful curves. Even the windows were curved. And because the upstairs bedroom is very narrow, the back wall appears foreshortened, and we could use the wall for the safe [where Gloria keeps her jewels and her money]. So that location dictated a lot of the action at the end."

It dictated, for example, that Jake and the joggers could be seen in the living room when they went to save Gloria, and that THE DOG would get in Jake's way. But then why wouldn't THE DOG be upstairs with his master, Alex Revelle? This question of logic led directly to the construction of what Brian called the "Doggie Doors" in the replica of Gloria's House at Stage 16, folding doors that would keep the dog on the ground floor where he would logically attack poor Jake.

"Funny, when I was renting houses," Brian recalled, "most of the houses that I saw were very masculine. They were all full of wood. Leather. I was here with my wife [from whom he has since separated] and we were seeing all these bachelor's houses; saunas in one room; sunken swimming pools; everything on the first floor; the living room going right into the bedroom. I said: 'Aren't there any nice little old ladies who live up in these hills here, nice family houses with a second floor?'

"No. No.

"It's incredible. I was amazed. They're all basically built like

the Playboy mansion.'' (Brian had his impressions of the bachelor pads built into the interior of Sam's House at Stage 16. It had a rotating round bed. It had a fish tank with mirrored walls. It had an exterior wall built to swing out of the way of the camera, permitting Brian maximum freedom to pan the dark, shiny, rapacious interior. Then the wall would swing back into place so that it could be included in a 360-degree shot. This technique was called ''wilding out'' the wall.)

''I also wanted Gloria's House to be seemingly isolated,'' Brian continued. ''She's a woman alone. Her husband's never there. And I wanted it to look like a high-security house, difficult to get into.''

Gloria's House on Miller Drive was as hard to get to for the *Body Double* crew as it was for Jake Scully. It had been built (but not quite finished) a few years back by owners unable to move in, it was rumored among the crew, because of shifting foundations and the constant need for renewed retaining walls to hold the house onto the steep hillside. Ida's greensmen had landscaped the barren property with truckloads of chopped branches, artificial ''grass'' matting; potted plants with pink and orange flowers. The house was white inside and out.

''You should have seen this place before we dressed it,'' said Frank Pierson, the location manager. ''The neighbors came around as we were putting in the landscaping and said wow, it's never looked so good.''

To get to this house, you had to traverse serpentine roads that were much too narrow for movie trucks and cranes and heavy equipment to climb comfortably. Construction on the roads narrowed them even further. If it rained, forget it. This was one of those famous California-modern pueblos, where heavy storms washed the high houses down onto the lower houses, and life itself depended on the strength of your safety brakes. In the quietest of times, the driveways were all blind.

By the time your car had ascended to Gloria's House, you were in culture shock, but then there was more. Her driveway. Its angle of incline more suited a hair-raising ride at Disneyland than human habitation.

On the night of March 16–17, *Body Double* started shooting Gloria's House. The camera was mounted in calm and quiet on the wrap-around terrace of the Telescope House across the valley. But its vision was panoramic. Therefore, the whole valley had to be lit. It took extra rigging crews all day to get the house and the valley prepared for shooting. Brian arrived around seven. He could do nothing to speed up the monumental task, so he went home at around ten and came back at midnight. He didn't get his first shot until 1:30 in the morning.

To light this location required seven different sets of lights at seven different vantage points.

Moonlight was provided by a Mark Lift 65, a giant crane with giant lights atop it. It was referred to familiarly as a condor, after a rival product. "They're made in Long Beach," Steve Burum said affectionately. "They carry three 6K HMIs. They're wonderful."

The interior lights of the empty house had been completely rigged by the crew. They were set to be brighter downstairs than upstairs, except for the upstairs bathroom which was as bright as the downstairs. (This was only sensible. Bathrooms *are* brighter.)

The bathroom and kitchen lights were set so that they mirrored each other's intensity and would bounce evenly.

There were lights rigged in the garage. The glass door of the garage had been frosted to create an eerie, flat effect, quite different from the clear lighting of the lived-in rooms.

There were lights along the driveway, placed at equal intervals, so that the audience would see that the house was on a steep hill and could follow any movements of cars or people up to it.

All the houses in the foreground of Gloria's House were lit so that the area was highlighted and the geography made clear.

Two huge hillsides—one below the house and one above—had been lit, sculpting both the real trees and the artificial landscaping that the greensmen had brought in.

All of these lights, requiring thousands of yards of cable and four 800 amp generators (two of which had replaced the set creating the flicker) and dozens and dozens of workmen in addition to the regular crew, had to be balanced in intensity with the outlying sea of lights from the sprawling city. If the lights on Gloria's House were too bright, then the lights of the city wouldn't read. Steve Burum wandered about with a reflective spot light meter that helped him judge intensities of light at great distances; he had the look of a kid in a lab so engrossed in his experiment that he has forgotten to take off his baseball jacket. "This is a big deal," he said of the three-ring circus all around him.

At 10:10, Tim Griffith, the inexhaustible gaffer, came over from Gloria's House to see how things were shaping up from the camera's point of view. He stood on the wrap-around terrace in the sky and noticed immediately that the Mark Lift's towering arm had not been painted flat black. Steve Burum said, "Shit. Every condor we have should be painted black as standard operating procedure." A painter was dispatched. The giant crane was lowered and painted black. And while they were painting, they did the "dish," too.

The dish was a cable television-radio receiver often seen adjacent to high houses in the hills. But Gloria's House originally had no dish; Brian had it put there when he decided that Sam's disguise for the murder of Gloria would be an Indian.

"Sam's whole idea is for the Indian to be noticed," Brian said. "Being an actor and a murderer, he has picked a disguise that people will notice. He wants everyone to identify this

Indian. I saw some stills of Indians who do construction at high altitudes. They're apparently not afraid of heights. I took pictures of Indians way up on top of beams. I thought, the Indian is working on this microwave antenna at Gloria's House, observing her and trying to figure out how to get in. The husband, Sam, wants everyone in the neighborhood to think that. So with the Indian on the dish, you've got Sam's attempt to create something very obvious and blatant.''

The dish became black.

The black made it disappear into the night sky.

So it was dulled with silver.

The silver reflected the night sky and made the dish disappear once again.

So it was painted gray.

The company painter took a short cut the last time around. Instead of hitching rides with the company trucks and waiting for more reactions from Steve and Brian, he climbed the bluff above the driveway with a rope, then scaled one of the high rolls of escarpment wire that stood on top of it, landed on the ridge above and began painting. Like Tim Griffith on his bicycle at Mulholland, he had learned that the surest way to traverse a traffic jam was by foot power.

The walkie-talkies started breaking down.

John Englert, the best boy (roughly, the second-in-command of the electricians), a tough, craggy man who smiled sweetly and looked like a rock, could be seen standing at the top of Gloria's driveway trying to communicate with Emmett Brown across the valley at the Telescope House. ''Hello, Emmett . . . hello, Emmett . . . goddammit, why don't you answer?''

''Bobby?'' said Joe. ''Bobby, do you hear me?'' Yannetti was in the garage of Gloria's House; Joe was on the terrace of the Telescope House; Bobby heard nothing.

''Tanenbaum!''

Jim Tanenbaum juggled the batteries in the walkie-talkies, muttering that if only Columbia had used his equipment to start with instead of making the movie rent their own, then they wouldn't have all this trouble with unrecharged batteries and lost fog horns.

A red truck mounted with a snow white winch from Hal's Crane Service was parked at the top of the driveway. Somehow. Behind the truck sat Marie, a red-haired, motherly woman who was the company first aid nurse. She was warming her fingers in a paper cup of hot water from the ever-bubbling cauldrons that the catering crew hauled around the hillsides to keep the company going. Marie watched the red truck leaning on its safety brakes. She watched the Indian stunt double climb into a large red cage, which was attached to the winch and swung upward by the crane as the truck backed down the driveway, upward and upward, 50, 60, 80 feet in the air above the floor of the road below, to the dish. The stunt double was playing the Indian who was being played by Sam Bouchard who was being played by Alex Revelle being played by Gregg Henry who was home safe in bed. This stunt double didn't like the cage. He preferred to cling to its outside while winching toward the dish. Nurse Marie looked up at the acrobatics in the night sky and said that she hoped her presence intimidated people so that they would try very hard not to get hurt.

Brian sat on the terrace, waiting.

Because he was waiting, he got some last-minute ideas.

Why not have a couple of joggers running past the house? To give it movement; to make it look less like a miniature.

Okay, sure, let's get some joggers.

But if we get some joggers, we have to dress the interior of the house, because the lens that pulls close enough to capture them may also capture Gloria's bed.

Okay, what have we got to put on the bed?

Call Ida.

Ida says it should be a fur piece.

But there's no fur piece here! says Horst Grandt, the properties master. How am I supposed to manufacture a major interior at the last minute when the decorating crew has not got their stuff on the set?! This is Cloudia's problem.

Okay, call Cloudia.

Why don't we just hire ten set decorators to be on hand during these nights shoots in case Brian gets an idea?! says Cloudia. Then Horst won't be mad at *me*!

Okay, okay, forget it, we're not prepared, forget the bed.

Anyway, the house is only "greened out" for a distance shot, worries the bleary Ida from her home. If Brian shoots too close, we'll see the artificial grass matting.

Okay. Onward. New idea. What about a searchlight in the sky? Searchlights crossing the sky "say" Hollywood.

Eric gets on the phone. It's almost 1:00 A.M. Hi, my name is Eric Schwab, I'm with Columbia Pictures, we're shooting a movie in the Hollywood Hills and we'd like a searchlight to traverse the sky. Got one?

No.

Try again.

No.

Try again.

No.

Try again.

Sure, says somebody in San Diego. We can get it to you by 3:00 A.M.

Ray Hartwick, the production manager, stands by Brian De Palma's chair on the terrace.

"Now is not the time," he says.

"Right!" De Palma roars mildly. "The voice of reason prevails. Forget it."

Forget it, Eric.

Forget it, San Diego, Eric says. Thanks anyway.

There was beginning to be some talk in the calm atmosphere of the Telescope House that *Body Double* might have saved itself an awful lot of trouble if this whole location had been built in miniature. Ray Hartwick thought no. Even though it was a killer shot, it could be completed in a couple of nights. And miniatures took weeks to build, you couldn't move joggers around them, couldn't have cars driving up to them; besides, it would have cost just as much to do a miniature, maybe more.

Over at Gloria's House, the exhausted grips and carpenters and electricians stood up and ate their dinners off paper plates on a stone wall. A young black woman, part of the auxiliary rigging crew, climbed the killer driveway carrying a 4′ × 8′ slab of plywood. "Way to go, sweetpea," said a lumberjack with a Nike T-shirt. She would have hit him with the plywood except that the driveway was so damn steep.

Steve Burum and Brian De Palma looked at the seven sets of lights on and around Gloria's House and decided it was okay now, they could start shooting. It was close to 2:00 A.M. The company did not wrap out of the location until six in the morning. The next day, Brian determined that he wasn't going to go through this again. "Sam's House is on top of a mountain!" he said. "What are we going to do, climb this *mountain* to light the place? It looks like a miniature to begin with, like something from outer space. So we're going to do it as a miniature."

Enough discussion.

Finished.

Onward.

The decision to build Sam's House in miniature created last-minute problems for Frank Pierson, the location manager. A

handsome, affable man, Pierson had two qualities essential to his job: he was charming and patient.

"Oh, I would not like his job," Ida Random laughed. "I take pictures, I give the pictures to Frank, I say here, get this, you go knock on the door. Some people say no. Some want money. Some don't care, no problem. And the location manager also has to consider where we're going to put the trucks and the cable and . . . everything." She rolled her pale blue eyes. "Everything."

To understand Frank Pierson's predicament, it must be understood that movies cannot stop shooting. The company is being paid to work. If they don't work, they get paid anyway. Like an expensive machine that must work around the clock to justify its cost, *Body Double* could not switch off its power without enormous financial losses.

(The most agonizing test of this situation occurred about two weeks before *Body Double* finished shooting. John Englert, the well-loved best boy, fell ill on the set and went to lie down for a bit. Emmett Brown, the key grip and John's old friend, grew frightened. John had a history of heart trouble. The medics came. The ambulance came. John was dead by the time they got him to the hospital. The company went into shock: morale was shattered. Money or no money, machine or no machine, Brian sent everybody home.)

To keep things moving constantly, the location manager had to have "cover" locations where the movie can go to shoot if unforeseen events intervene. (Rain is one of those.) The stage sets were cover locations. So was Tower Video, a convenient, easily booked interior. Frank Pierson's job was to juggle all these considerations—weather, traffic, parking, legalities, rentals—so as to keep the movie shooting at maximum efficiency, all the time.

"Friday, it was decided that instead of going to Sam's House

for three days, we were only going to go one day,'' Frank said. ''Because they decided to build the miniature. Because it took so much time to light Gloria's House, they didn't want to do that again. Well, so, now we're only shooting at Sam's House on Wednesday and we've got Monday and Tuesday to fill up. We're not ready at Stage 16 yet. What to do?

''Well, we had to go back to Long Beach [where they had shot the purse snatching incident, the tunnel scenes, and Jake's confrontation with Gloria at the beach]. When we were in Long Beach the first time, we didn't get the tunnel shoot finished because of an electrical failure. So my first hope was to go back to Long Beach.

''We tried to get permission from the Long Beach authorities late Friday night after all the permit offices were closed.

''Now they have a sticky situation in Long Beach in staffing with the police. You're obligated to have two policemen working with you there. Plus a fire safety officer. And they say that over the weekend they're unable to call anybody and set that up. So I called the city manager of Long Beach four times on Friday night at his home, and he tried to help us. He got the marine department to agree that we could use the parking lot down at the beach. But then he said the police department could not come up with the necessary people.

''So I went into my song and dance about hey, if we go on location, we spend $50,000 in one day and here's a $50,000 Normandy Landing in Long Beach which is bottlenecked for the lack of two policemen, isn't there anything we can do?

''Do we have to pay some higher fee to the city? Some overtime? Please try to respond to our need, we are in trouble, we have no place to go on Monday.

''But he got stopped by his own police department.

''So then we dreamed up the idea of putting together a combination of going to the Callboard Theatre [where Jake

would go for an audition and meet Sam Bouchard for the first time] and Tower Video [where he would rent Holly Body's tape], each of which was estimated to be about half a day. So that would make a package.

"But we were contractually limited to go to the Callboard Theatre only on April 2nd.

"So I called the Callboard Theatre and was able to get them to say yes, you can come on Monday morning.

"And the people at Tower Records and Tower Video are extremely cooperative, as far as they're concerned, we can come any time.

"But that still leaves: what do you do about the city permits?

"Well, Callboard Theatre is in the city of Los Angeles, so we figured if we showed up at the permit office sharply at 7:30 Monday, we could handle that. Los Angeles is trying to promote filming in the city and they move quickly.

"Tower Video is in Los Angeles County, and that's a stickier situation. I called the county permit office and asked for a permit for Tower Video that would just go on and on since we were holding Tower Video as our chief cover location. They said 'No way.' But they did promise to get us our permit quickly. 'We won't be able to get you an encroachmant permit, you'll have to stay off the street, off the sidewalk, but stay on private property and we will respond quickly.'

"So now we have a package. We call up Ray Hartwick late Saturday afternoon and say okay, we can go to Callboard Theatre Monday morning and Tower Video Monday afternoon. We have zilch permits but we will get those on Monday morning.

"Now. The State of California requires that 'No Parking' signs be posted twenty-four hours before there's a movie shoot, to give people time to move their cars. We don't have enough lead time to do that. So we call four Los Angeles policemen, off

duty retired officers, and ask them to be at the location at 6 A.M. and, in a nice way, to clear the streets.

"We tried to put our trucks on Alfred, the little side street, because the merchants on Melrose are notoriously sensitive about letting film companies park in front of their stores; they say it hurts business. But on Alfred, it's residential, which means bumper-to-bumper parking overnight. As people went to work, our policemen would try to hold open those spaces. That was on the west side of the street. And as it happened, on the east side of the street it was cleaning day, so people were automatically clearing the side of the street. We thought okay, if worse comes to worst and there's nowhere else to land, we park on the east side of the street and when the people come by and say 'You're in our street cleaning lane,' we say 'Don't worry, when we're through we'll clean the street for you.'

"So it worked out; no problem.

"But the real parking problem was on Sunset, because the county road department will not permit any filming at all on Sunset Boulevard after 12 noon. You have to do it after 3 A.M. So the trick is to stay on private property. To not be on the sidewalks.

"The Tower Video lot is very small, so we sent our catering truck over to the Spago lot and they let us park on the deal that we would be gone by lunchtime and then we got some spots for our extras to park in down at the old *Playboy* building.

"So Brian did Callboard Theatre in the morning, then Tower Video and Tower Records later in the day, and meanwhile, Eric was able to get the permit for Long Beach on Tuesday."

All this Frank Pierson said on Monday morning, in the pleasant sunshine of Tower Records' friendly parking lot. He wasn't even breathing hard.

He had successfully maneuvered the company to its one night at Sam's House, which was a kind of flying saucer mounted on

a long pole on the top of a small mountain. Nobody lived in the pole part of the house. The real interior action occurred in the flying saucer part. Melanie Griffith could have ridden up to this house in the funicular. Instead she chose to climb the hundreds and hundreds of steps, perhaps because location shooting was coming to an end and soon she would be in the studio, in the double of Gloria's House, doing her masturbation routine, and her body had to stay perfect. So she climbed and climbed in her six-inch heels, looking like she was ascending to an ancient temple where young girls went to be violated and sacrificed. It was rumored among the crew that a former owner of Sam's House had been stabbed 36 times (maybe 47 times, maybe 52 times) by his lover. It was said that a contractor had been crushed to death in a horrible accident under the eaves. With its futuristic interior and primitive exterior, Sam's House might have been inhabited with equal relish by Montezuma and Jabba the Hutt.

Brian De Palma flew past the house on his swan-crane, looking for the shot of Craig Wasson peering out of the flying saucer window, the shot of Jake Scully seeing; looking for some more mortals to seduce.

Brian De Palma, first assistant director Joe Napolitano, and Melanie Griffith on the set of *Body Double*.

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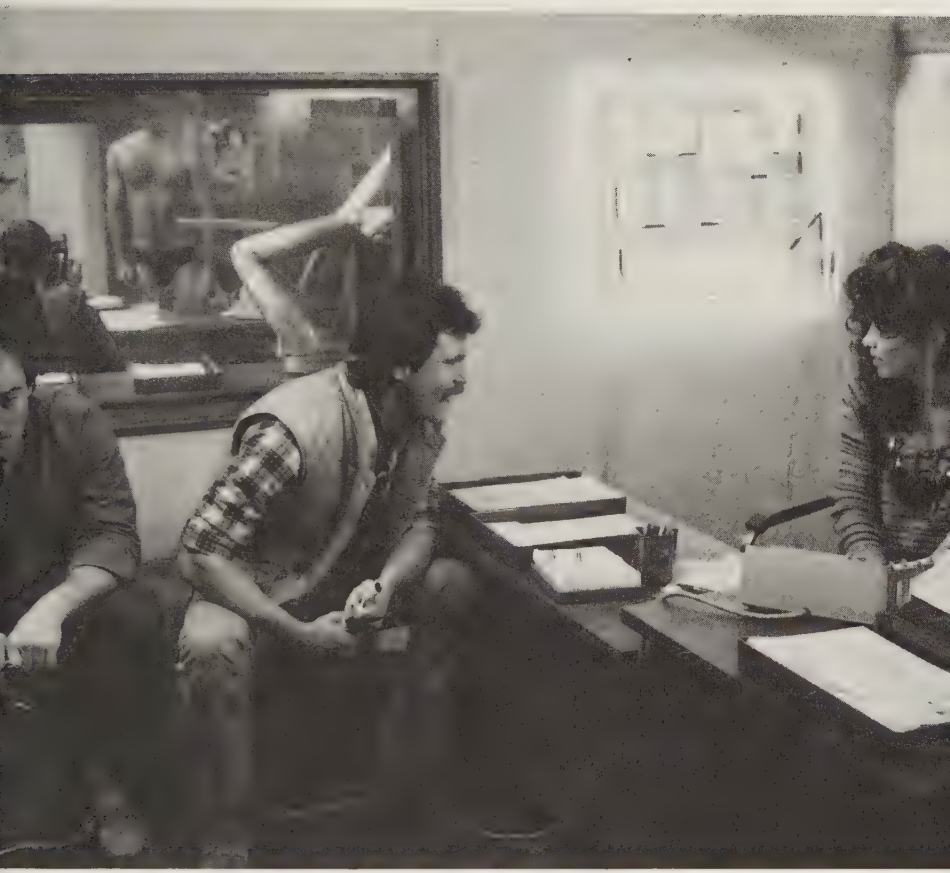
The Look of Los Angeles, 1984: "The Hollywood actor and that whole trip . . . the adult porn world . . . rich Beverly Hills. . . . It's all Hollywood."—Ida Random, production designer

High above Sunset Boulevard: Camera operator Doug Ryan, Brian De Palma, and director of photography Steve Burum.

Sam's House: Tall and imposing, it commanded the Hollywood Hills like an airport observation tower.

Craig Wasson as Jake Scully moves into Sam's House, with its dark, futuristic interior, high-tech electronics, circular bed, and panoramic views.



The porn world: Michael Kearns, playing an actor waiting to audition, and Gela Jacobson, playing porn producer Corso's secretary, argue against a backdrop of sleaze.

The out-of-work actor: Jake Scully, pictures and resumé in hand, waits his turn to try out.

Glamorous Beverly Hills: following Deborah Shelton as Gloria Revelle through the upscale Rodeo Collection.

Making *Body Double* Happen: "You have to listen to the people you hire, because they're there to help you. And they have ideas and see things that you may miss."—Brian De Palma

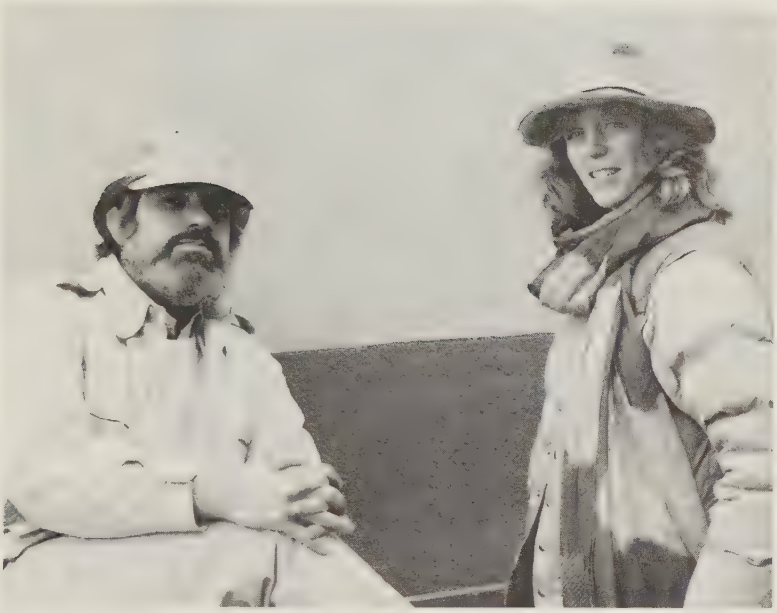
First assistant cameraman Dusty Blauvelt, Doug Ryan, and Brian De Palma shoot Jake Scully's claustrophobic attack in the vampire graveyard, for the movie-within-the-movie.

Shooting in the Rodeo Collection. Left to right, foreground: executive producer Howard Gottfried; women's wardrobe head Francine Jamison; Steve Burum; special effects makeup designer Tom Burman; Brian De Palma, half-concealed by the camera; Doug Ryan, pointing; Dusty Blauvelt; Joe Napolitano, pointing; and Craig Wasson.

Dusty Blauvelt, Brian De Palma, sound mixer Jim Tanenbaum, and Wilma Garscadden-Gahret, script supervisor.

Gregg Henry (Sam Bouchard) and Howard Gottfried have an off-camera laugh.

Top to bottom: Steve Burum, gaffer Tim Griffith, key grip Emmett Brown.



Brian De Palma and production designer Ida Random.

Tani Cohen and Camilla Turnbull, De Palma's assistants.

Shooting the accident on Mulholland Drive. *(opposite page top)*

Readying lights for a segment of the Big Tango sequence at Long Beach; Gaetano Lisi standing in for Craig Wasson. *(opposite page bottom)*

Blocking action for the climactic fight between Jake Scully and Alex Revelle.

The Seduction and Betrayal of Jake Scully: "Jake is the kind of guy who can fall in love with somebody from afar."—Brian De Palma

Craig Wasson as Jake Scully looks for work.

Jake is introduced to Sam Bouchard (played by Gregg Henry) by fellow actor Billy (played by Lane Davies).

Sam gives Jake his first look at the nightly erotic dance in the house across the canyon.

The object of Jake's obsession—Deborah Shelton as Gloria Revelle.

Detective McLean (Guy Boyd) questions the shattered Jake after Gloria's murder.

Melanie Griffith plays Holly Body, whose erotic dance looks strangely familiar to Jake Scully.

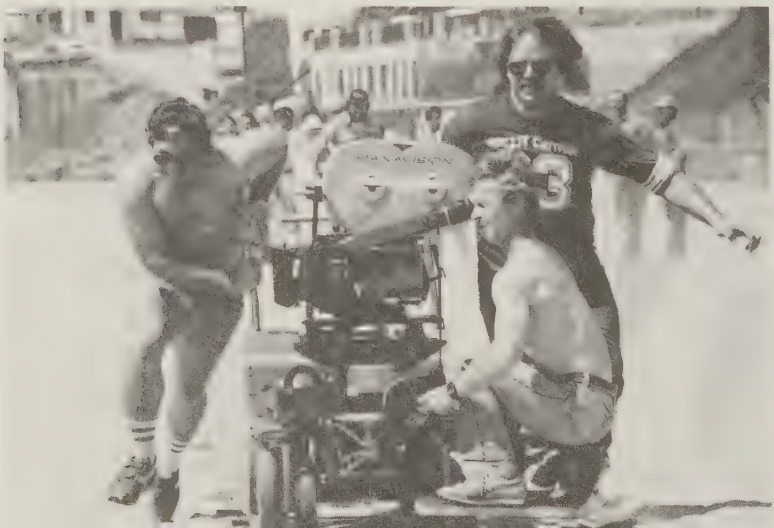
Holly and Jake co-star in a blue movie.

The dog blows the whistle on Jake.

Jake finally unmasks the man who has betrayed him.

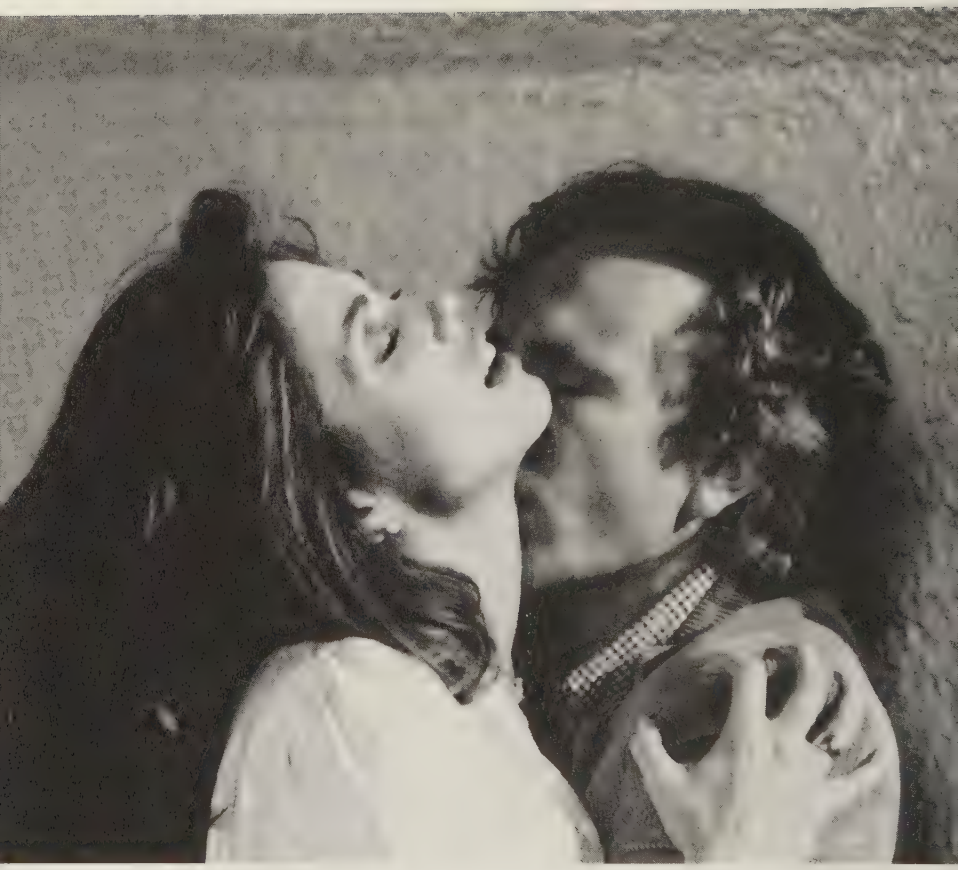
Brian De Palma sets up Jake's confrontation with Gloria on the beach.

The dolly grips and cameraman race alongside as Jake pursues the Indian.



Practicing claustrophobic terror in the tunnel.

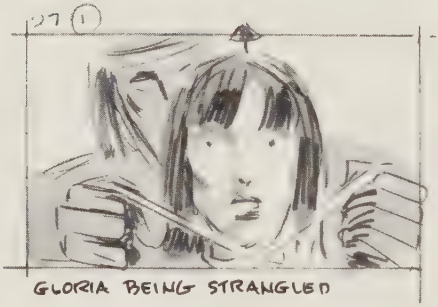
Gloria races to Jake's rescue past Francine Jamison, hairstylist Marlene Williams, Directors Guild trainee Margaret Nelson, and the surrealistic mural at the tunnel's entrance.



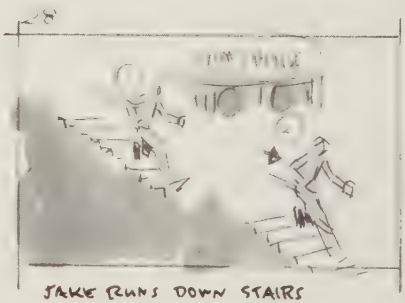
Momentary passion, ultimately unconsummated.

Standing in the grave, Brian De Palma, Steve Burum, and Joe Napolitano celebrate *Body Double*'s final take.

Murder By Shots: The following selected frames from the storyboard for *Body Double*, drawn by Matt Golden, show how De Palma developed his film visually even before there was a script. Included are some matching photos from the shoot itself. "What Jake hopes for is not that the murder will stop, but that the murder will continue . . . that this woman will somehow hold on so he can race to the house and save her" —Gerry Greenberg, editor

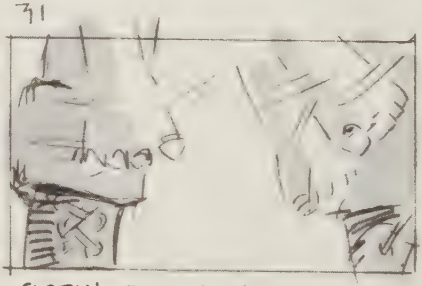


GLORIA BEING STRANGLED

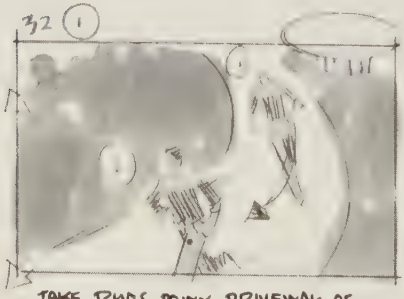


JAKE RUNS DOWN STAIRS

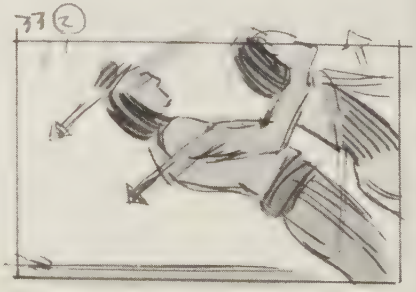
GLORIA STARTING TO BLACKOUT



GLORIA'S FEET KICKING

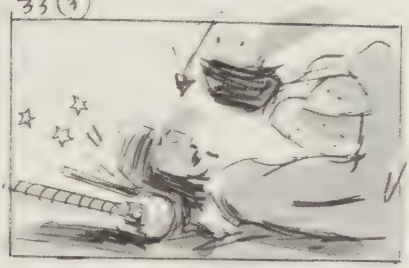


JAKE RUNS DOWN DRIVEWAY OF SAM'S
PAN WITH JAKE



INDIAN AND GLORIA FALLING ON BED

33 (3)

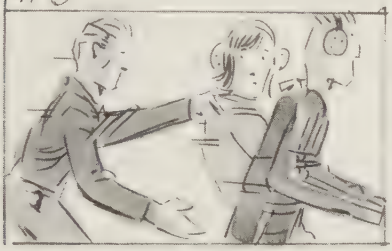


ZOOM IN AS INDIAN CRACKS HEAD OPEN ON DRILL

38

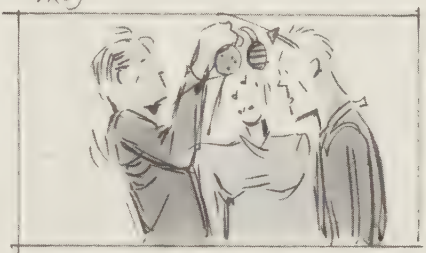
JAKE'S P.O.V. TRACKING JOGGERS

41 (1)



JAKE GRABS ONE JOGGER FROM BEHIND — THEY'RE WEARING WALKMANS

41 (2)



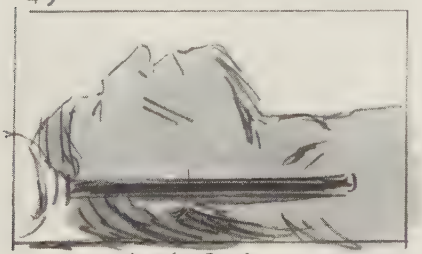
JAKE YANKS OFF HEADSET JAKE "GET THE POLICE — A WOMAN IS BEING KILLED!"

43

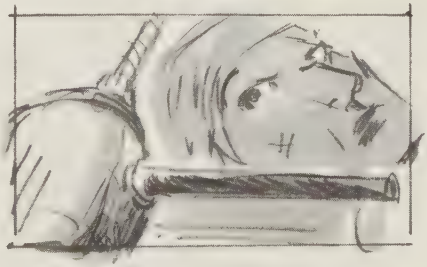
GLORIA LOOKS AND SEES INDIAN IS KNOCKED OUT - SHE GETS UP.

GLORIA ON END OF BED PICKS UP PHONE AND DIALS QUICKLY

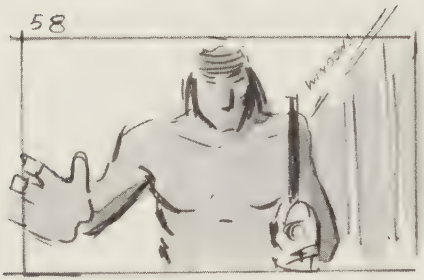
45



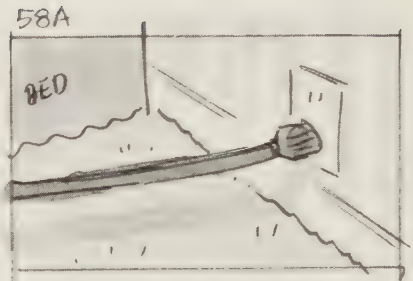
C.U. INDIAN (DRILL) INDIAN REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS



INDIAN LOOKS AT DRILL

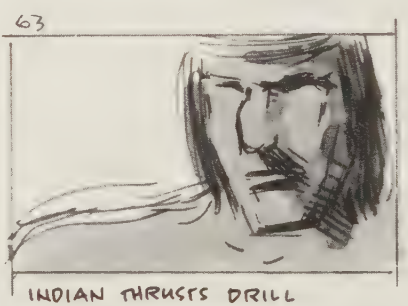


INDIAN WITH DRILL MOVES TOWARDS HER

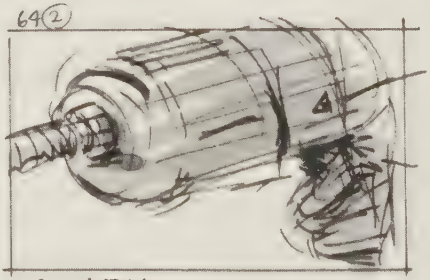


CORD IN WALL IS DRAWN TIGHT

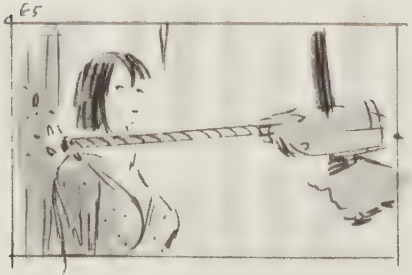
JAKE ATTACKS FRONT DOOR



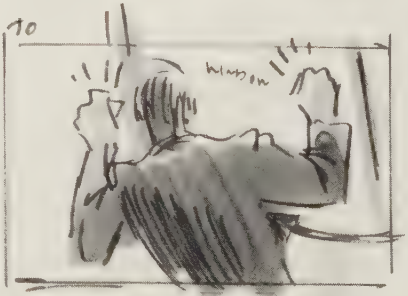
INDIAN THRUSTS DRILL



C.U. DRILL
DRILL JERKS FORWARD

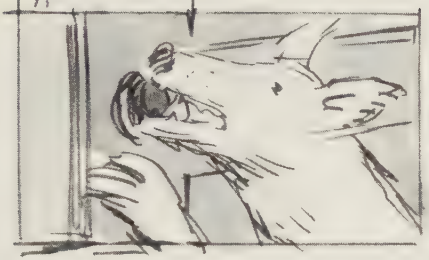


DRILL CATCHES SLEEVE OF GLORIA'S GOWN AND TEARS IT UP



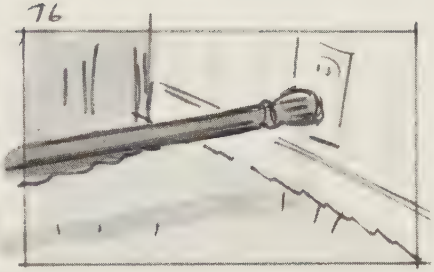
JAKE GIVES UP ON DOOR AND RUNS AROUND TO WINDOW

71



DOG ATTACKS DOOR

76

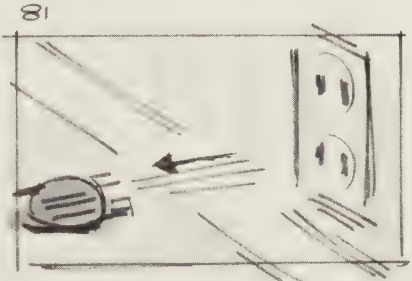


CORD IS PULLED TIGHT

80

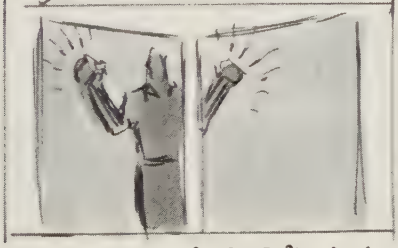
DRILL MOVES TOWARDS GLORIA

81



PLUG PULLED OUT OF WALL

85

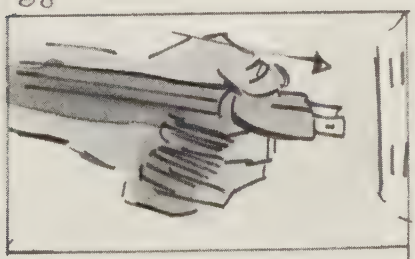


JAKE STILL OUTSIDE POUNDING ON WINDOW

86

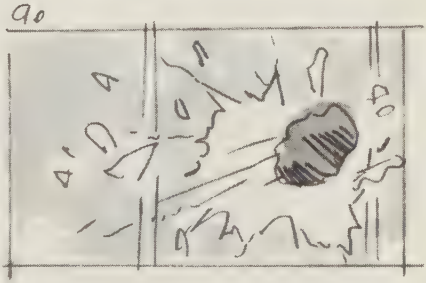
DOG STOPS ATTACKING DOOR HEARS JAKE DOWNSTAIRS AT WINDOW

88

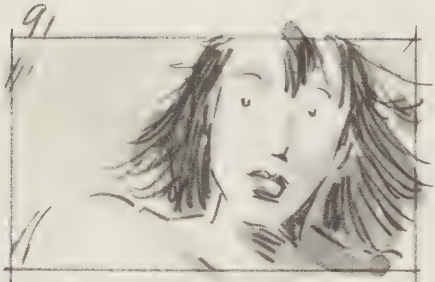


INDIAN PUTS PLUG BACK INTO WALL

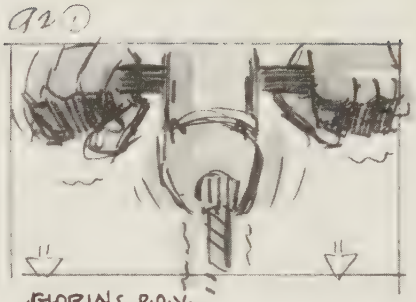
90



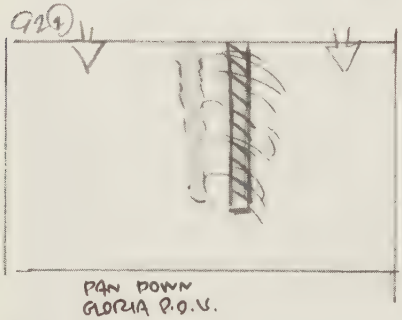
JAKE THROWS ROCK THRU WINDOW



GLORIA LOOKS UP AT INDIAN / DRILL



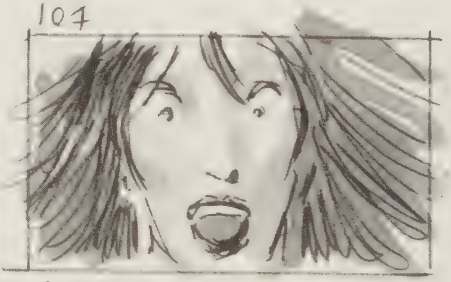
GLORIA'S P.O.V.
DRILL ON



PAN DOWN
GLORIA P.O.V.
BIT DESENDING—

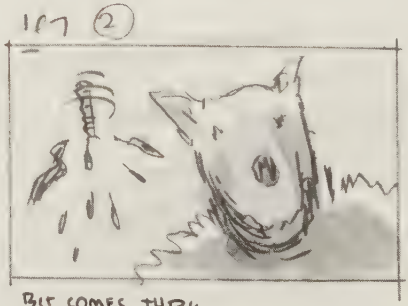
DOG RUNS TOWARDS WINDOW

JAKE JUMPS THRU BROKEN
WINDOW



GLORIA SCREAMS

JOGGERS ENTER HOUSE, WALK
TOWARDS JAKE



BIT COMES THRU
BIT WHIRLS - SPLATTERS BLOOD

THREE

THE BIG TANGO

"When I was in the army, I happened to walk in on some dailies which were being shown before mine. The army was having trouble with small-caliber high-velocity bullets because they would go right through the bodies, so they had these new bullets that would tumble and would tear a bigger hole. They were using Vietnamese bodies and they were shooting them. Those were the dailies I walked in on. I lasted about thirty seconds."

Steve Burum, Director of Photography, *Body Double*

One day after being fitted for the nightgown she would be slaughtered in, Deborah Shelton was summoned to Casa De Palma (his trailer, so dubbed by the crew) to meet with Brian. "We have a problem," he said. "This is not a Brian De Palma body."

For the next forty-eight hours, Deborah Shelton ate everything in sight.

Okay, so it's not a De Palma body, it's my body and if Brian De Palma doesn't think my body is perfect enough, well FUCK HIM!

Brian said, "Deborah, listen, it is the obligation of a director to photograph only that which he sees as perfection. Perfection in the composition of the shot. Perfection in a body.

"In this movie, this guy is following you. He's walking behind you. Think what he looks at most of the time. You have a great figure from the waist up. But you have to lose weight. Crash diet. Run more."

Deborah thought: he's right. I should want to look perfect.

So she stopped eating everything in sight. Brian hired her a trainer, a muscular giant named Pete who worked for an outfit called Body by Jake. Pete came to Deborah's house every day, having been on the road since four in the morning, exercising actresses in their homes. He stood over Deborah with a towel and a broomstick and counted like a machine gun while she raced through a grueling program of exercise. He made her hang from the broomstick and run in place. He made her run on her belly, kicking out her legs. She stretched. She bounced. She jumped. Her braided pony tail jumped. After five minutes, she began to sweat and grunt. She did fifty wide knee bends while holding the inside of her ankles, thrusting her behind toward the floor. She sat with her legs spread so wide they were perpendicular to her torso, heaved forward then right then left one hundred times in each direction, clutching the towel that Pete held to steady her. After ten minutes she began to gag and scream, staggering like a drunk. Don't stop, Pete said. Keep going. She kept going. Her face contorted; she actually looked ugly. After seventeen minutes she collapsed on the floor in her baby blue

gym suit, limp as last year's Cabbage Patch Doll. Her breathing was hysterical. She was grateful not to have thrown up.

This torture was happening to an actress who wore a size 7 dress and weighed 123 pounds.

Deborah Shelton was a breezy, outgoing woman not averse to a bit of gossip, who arrived on the set with a little fur jacket and big curlers in her hair. Her distinguished Virginia gentleman father sometimes visited the shoot; her mother took messages and helped with the kids and confessed to a nostalgia for steaks and hamburgers seldom served in chic Hollywood. At the time *Body Double* was shooting, Deborah had a manager (not to be confused with her agent) named Sue Cameron, who knew exactly how to place her lovely client. "Deborah is a brunette with a blonde personality. Like Jackie Smith. Like Victoria Principal. Linda Gray is over thirty so she can be what she wants. Joan Collins is the ultimate brunette personality."

To the naked eye, Deborah Shelton was so beautiful that it was almost impossible to see what Brian De Palma had become so agitated about.

"It's my hips," she said. (Where? What?) "It's my thighs, he wants my behind off my knees." (What's wrong with your thighs? What's wrong with your behind?) "It's here," she said.

She pointed to a 3–4 inch expanse roughly between her thigh and her panty line where, if you looked very, very hard, you could see a very, very slight bulge. As for the behind, it was impossible for the naked eye to detect any problem.

But we're not talking about naked eyes here. We're talking about a clinging white skirt with a slit up the back (what Steve Burum called "the Suzy Wong skirt") and a silk nightgown, bias cut, backless, and a camera that fattens automatically. We're talking about Brian's eye, Steve's eye, cold and abstracting as the manipulated lenses.

It could not have been pleasant for Deborah to hear her lovely

body derided. But she accepted Brian's view because he was the director, he was all-powerful, and this was her first film, her first chance to break out of television stereotyping. Besides, to Deborah, Brian was a new kind of experience. He used words like "perfection." He was an "artist."

"Most of the time, what you get for directors are traffic cops who just take their Maalox and try to make it through the day," she said cheerfully. "I don't say I'm the greatest actress, but I love it, and I want to work at it, and I know I'm directable. I wouldn't do what I'm doing if it weren't for the movie. When you're just starting out, you do what the director says. I want to be a working actress. I want to work for a long time. Being a nice-looking girl in this town, your chances of doing that are much slimmer because you get into TV parts and then you're 'The Girl.' That's what they call you. They don't remember your name. You're there to dress up 'The A-Team' or 'The Fall Guy.' "

Deborah sat back on the floor of her pretty living room and pushed her kids' toys out of the way. Her mother served some coffee. Sue Cameron sat on the sofa. They saw everything very clearly, these two, and much more deeply than the camera.

"For the past two years," Sue Cameron said, "whoever the guy is, if he has a series, Deborah has done it. They call all the time: can Deborah do this show? Sure, sure she can. But she can't establish a personality in a one-hour show. She's a prop. She wears clothes. She smiles. She's 'The Girl.' "

"So what happens in five years?" Deborah said. "You won't be 'The Girl' any more. So what are you going to be? 'The Lady'? Is it gonna be: 'Okay, get "The Lady" in here'?"

No.

In five years, it's gonna be nothing.

It's gonna be over.

"You got it," Deborah said.

"Deborah did 'The Yellow Rose,' thirteen episodes," her manager explained. "We thought that would be the thing that would make her known so that she could work; that's all anybody wants, to be known so maybe they can get some decent work. But the series didn't get the ratings and was cancelled."

So what do you do?

"You take the television shows, and you cut the tape, you cut everything out except Deborah's scenes, and you pray that the script is halfway decent, and you get a cassette and one day you show it to a Brian De Palma, who might take the chance. It took two years of doing these stupid parts and praying and fighting to get Deborah into *Body Double*."

But the role of Gloria in *Body Double* is still "The Girl."

"Right," says Deborah, drinking one of the umpteen glasses of water per day that her diet requires. "But it's in a *film*."

And Gloria is the catalyst for the action.

"One day my commercial agent called me to go on this interview quickly for *Body Double*," Deborah said. "I thought: isn't that the porno movie? I don't want to go on that. They said, no, your part will have no nudity, no anything. So I went. I don't remember if Brian said anything to me. Brian doesn't keep eye contact. He looks at you and then looks away. I had the feeling that his mind was somewhere else. I felt: Well, forget this.

"But the next day when I came back, it was just Brian and he was very nice to me; it was more relaxed. He worked with me for about two hours. I liked working with him. He talked about my life. He wants things to pull from. He's nice and calm and doesn't shout at you.

"But I had to make sure it wasn't a porno movie.

"My agent said to me: look, you're going to see a lot of tits and ass up there, but it's not you. It is a step toward your

credibility in motion pictures. I asked everyone about the nudity. But I hesitated to ask Brian. So I asked Howard Gottfried. And he said 'Melanie Griffith.'

"Okay. So it's Melanie. It's not me. Okay.

"Whatever people say about De Palma, he's famous. People go to see his pictures. And that's important for me. I'll be seen."

Sue Cameron said, "Look, it's a picture we think will make money because it's so controversial, whether it ends up being a brilliant work of art or whatever, it will be a high-grossing picture or a medium, not a low grosser. They'll know she was there. Sure, she's still 'The Girl' but it's a Brian De Palma movie, a Columbia movie, and they'll know her face. That's why you take the shot. Because they'll know her face."

Deborah Shelton said: "Even from the test, when he asked me to read *Scenes from a Marriage* and *Body Heat* and Brian said that these were the qualities of Gloria's character, helpless, frightened, betrayed, victim, I knew this movie was going to be more for me. It felt like more than the TV director saying: 'Okay, she got it, thanks, honey.' It feels like someone cares what you have inside."

For Steve Burum, as for Pete the trainer, Deborah's body was a technical challenge. "The two basic elements in all Brian's pictures are the voyeurism and the pursuit," he explained.

Gloria is being spied on, by Jake and the Indian. Then she is being pursued, by Jake and the Indian. Therefore, the camera is always seeing Gloria, first as an object in a window across the hills, then as an object moving away from the camera being pursued. So Burum's aesthetic direction from De Palma was simple and straightforward: make the object (the woman) look as beautiful and desirable as possible; make pursuing the object as dangerous and frightening as possible.

"My old teacher, Charlie Clark, used to say: 'You have to make your people look good,' " Steve recalled, "It's part of the craft to do that. The background may be lit moody and wonderful like the scene calls for, but the people are lit so they look their best." This translated into real problems for *Body Double* because the background was "the glare"—icky porn palaces; purple restaurants; harsh bright sun at open beaches. And even such beautiful people as Melanie and Deborah needed softer light to make them "look well" so they could personify Brian's loftiest dreams.

An example of how this challenge worked itself out in the shoot occurred at the Rodeo Collection.

The Rodeo Collection is an extremely expensive group of stores carved out of Rodeo Drive in the heart of Beverly Hills. Here the underground parking lot has a brick mosaic floor; the parking attendants wear white jackets, like waiters. Here you may see a pretty little dress in a window, inquire within and discover that it costs $3,000. This is where Gloria Revelle goes shopping. "I'll wear something special," she oozes on the telephone to a lover we shall never see. Jake Scully overhears. He can't wait to find out what she's going to wear. Turns out to be a new pair of fancy underpants.

The Louis Vuitton luggage store had been taken over by *Body Double*, given a French-accented saleswoman and redecorated into a place called Bellini's, a lingerie emporium. Cloudia, the interior decorator, filled the display cases with glaring snippets of silk; fuchsia nighties; scarlet bras. Proudly she pointed to an electric pink teddy with invisible snaps to provide quick access to the crotch. "When you wear that," she laughed, "everybody knows you mean business."

Up behind the camera, in a corner nook reminiscent of the Alhambra, Steve Burum consulted his light meter and smiled. "We're lucky," he said. "We have a cloudy day, and it sifts

out all the hard light.'' But just in case the disfiguring sun should dare to interfere, Emmett Brown's men had strung ropes across the entire open top of the Rodeo Collection, over which huge rolls of diffusing, filtering silk could quickly be unraveled.

This potential silk tent, the locations in the lap of luxury, the delectable underwear—all of it was programmed to keep the glare but still make Gloria worth watching. Her clothes, too, were designed as audience traps; ensnaring Jake's passion, thus ensnaring our interest; ultimately ensnaring the murder weapon, too.

These clothes were created at the TBS Wardrobe Department across the huge lot from Columbia Pictures headquarters. It was an interior from *Chinatown*, all white painted wood slats. Cadres of sewing machines and ironing boards and battered mannequins in the shapes of torsos of famous screen actresses sprawled across the wide floor, plugged to the ceiling by wires that rose up from the humming machinery and the hunched seamstresses like stalagmites.

Many of the women in this place came from Europe and Latin America, where the great traditions of couturier dressmaking still existed. They were union members, taking their breaks on time. They wore low-heeled shoes, carried their pins in little cushions worn on the wrist. No computerized, touch-control sewing machines for this group, no, they used the old-fashioned black industrial kind that made the durable clothes our mothers wore.

At the back of the floor, Gloria Greshem had a fitting room for the *Body Double* women's wardrobe. Another one of the shoot's cool blondes, Greshem could sometimes he seen on the set, balefully looking over the extras who had come dressed all wrong. If possible, she left the nitty gritty of ''being nice'' to these fools who arrived without pantyhose to Francine Jamison and Jim Tyson, who handled women's and men's wardrobe

respectively. Greshem tried to deal with the *big* problems of costuming this shoot—like making Deborah Shelton's look live up to the demands of Brian De Palma.

"When we started out," Greshem recalled, "management thought that we would buy everything in this movie off the rack. Then we found that the characters are very specific; the script is specific; we want certain colors. When you start putting all of these qualifications down, you will never find it off the rack. When you realize you need doubles and triples on them, then you really are backed into a corner and the only logical thing to do is design, to say this is what I want and put it on paper. Then you can have, hopefully, as many as you need. The kimono we're making six of because that's what she gets murdered in."

When Deborah rushed in with her perpetual curlers for her fitting, Louise, the head seamstress at women's wardrobe, and Gloria Greshem put her up on a pedestal and looked at the kimono. It had giant squared-off Japanese sleeves (Brian's suggestion), the better to ensnare the murdering drill. It was cut straight over the hip, to mask the infinitesimal bulge. It had a tiny bit of fullness in the front, to mask the infinitesimal tummy. And just in case the brutality of the murder should strip this lovely ice-blue garment off Deborah Shelton, Greshem had a bra and panties dyed to match. Deborah stood absolutely still on the fitting platform while the two women circled around her with narrow eyes, looking, looking. Louise was lobbying for a snap or two at the base of the cleavage. Gloria didn't want that. She could live with snaps under the kimono belt but not further up.

"It's long in front," said Gloria.

"It's the same length all around," said Louise.

"So why does it look to me like it's long in front?" said Gloria.

"Perhaps because it needs a snap or two at the base of the cleavage . . . ," said Louise.

Deborah Shelton made no comment. She figured that whatever these two decided about her snaps and her length would be just fine. She knew that the big square sleeve would break away clean when the drill hit it, scaring us to death before we realized that her arm had not also broken away. She knew that the color of the kimono was programmed to bring out the best in her ice-blue eyes. She knew that day by day, her body was getting closer to Brian's idea of "perfection" and that the camera would love her by the time she got drilled.

The sequence in *Body Double* in which Jake follows Gloria to the Rodeo Collection is really the beginning of the murder, because it is the beginning of our fear. We are afraid of what Gloria will lead Jake into. We are also afraid that she will see him, discovering that he (and we) have been watching her at intimate moments. At the same time, we are so moved by Jake's desire that we long to have him catch up with her. Brian laughingly called this sequence "a big tango"; like the pursuit of Angie Dickinson through the museum in *Dressed to Kill*, it was simultaneously sexy and scary, but this time we could see the pursuer as well as the pursued, and the pursuer, Jake, got himself into these increasingly *funny* situations. Every time we got so distracted by Jake's fear or his desire that we forgot he had followed Gloria initially to warn her about the Indian, the Indian would pop up like a lewd suede jack-in-the-box, smiling.

Craig played the tango straight as an arrow, and with burning intensity. His face provided the reflecting surface for the events, and Greenberg cut his reactions in like drum beats. "I feel Craig Wasson's embarrassment," Greenberg said, "I feel his mother telling him this is dirty; thoughts that no director could

have seen or asked for, that only the actor can provide." If Greenberg could find the subtext of what Craig was feeling, he had more than a reaction—he had an action; he had acting; another event in the movie as powerful visually as Melanie stripping; and this was what he looked for, rattling thousands of feet of film athletically through his editing machines. The intense specificity of his reactions was what Craig gave the movie; it was why he was never really at any time just "a mechanism in a very complicated machine."

At Bellini's, Jake watches through the store window, seeing just enough of Gloria changing into her new underpants to get wild with desire. The French-accented saleswoman spots him for a peeper, calls security. Security is very tough-looking and could easily tear little Jake to pieces, but Jake is so distracted by Gloria that he doesn't realize security is on its way. And we are, therefore, scared of security; we've completely forgotten the Indian.

Who appears suddenly (gasp) through another window right before security gets to Jake, and we find out that security is a nice man who says: "Excuse me, may I help you?" (Giggle.)

By this time Jake is running off to warn Gloria about the Indian.

But he's lost her. He can't find her anywhere. We figure she's slipped away. Jake gets into an elevator. There she is. (Gasp.) Just as he summons up enough courage to speak to her, a whole load of people walk onto the elevator. So Jake can't say anything. And then the elevator opens again and who's out there but the Indian?! (Giggle.) Why shouldn't we giggle? We aren't scared because there's a whole elevator full of people and the Indian can't get on. Now we are free to slip back into the desire mode.

Unlike Robert Avrech, we do not scream "What?!" when Jake pulls Gloria's discarded underpants out of the garbage. But we laugh. Because this isn't a tango, it's turning out to be a

mock tango; any minute, Marlon Brando is going to pull down his pants and moon the band.

So we are disarmed again, our emotions juggled; first fear, then desire, then laughter, then fear, and off we go to the beach where Gloria has said she will meet her lover.

But now we are past the flirtation part of the tango, and into the fear-and-sex part. And for the murder to work, the beach scene (in which, basically, nothing scary happens) has to scare us to death.

Originally the scene in which Jake follows Gloria Revelle to the beach did not occur on a beach. "They just go to a motel somewhere," Brian said. But when Ida and her scouts showed him the location at Long Beach, the steep cliff with the terraced motel stacked up on it like a birthday cake, the wide and open white sands, Brian knew he was home. "I always think that romantic encounters in open spaces are more dangerous than in dark enclosed spaces," he said. "Once you're alone in a room with somebody, it's all over, let's face it.

"She's going to a rendezvous. Where would a woman like that have a rendezvous? The Beverly Hills Hotel? No. Because they would know her there, she's well off; she'll be recognized. So she goes to a place where she isn't known, down to this motel somewhere on the beach. Any time you can make Gloria more aesthetically pleasing, that's good, and on the beach she looks like some kind of romantic princess, you know, you're looking at the ocean and you see the sparkling . . .

"Now that'll look nice . . .

"So let's shoot it."

Since there is virtually no dialogue in this beach scene, the story telling and the scare had to be accomplished entirely by visual technique. To track the technique, you had to keep track of how Brian was manipulating the camera to tell his characters' point of view.

Many directors will do a point-of-view tracking shot by laying the track a few feet to the side of the moving character and running the camera along to the rear of him, the better to obscure the dolly track. This was not strictly the exact point of view of the character, but rather three-quarters of the point of view. Brian De Palma insisted on the exact article. His dolly track was laid directly behind the moving character; the track up ahead was masked with sand, and as the dolly moved and the track was no longer in danger of entering the shot, the sand was swept away.

Brian also took great care to shoot continuous motion, the better to preserve the actual timing of the characters' perceptions. Some directors prefer to shoot pieces, then assemble them in the editing room. Brian would often shoot the whole scene, running the camera for several minutes. Then he would shoot extra pieces (close-ups; flashbacks) and Gerry Greenberg would be able to cut the pieces into the longer shot without violating the real timing of the action.

Given these shooting preferences in his director, Steve Burum analyzed his task in the Beach Scene precisely the same way that an English Lit major goes at a poem, breaking it down for its gross meanings, its major and minor impacts, its pragmatic vocabulary.

"The first thing you have to do," he said, "is to like one of the characters. Then you put them in a situation that is perilous. One of the best things to do is not have them know they're in a perilous situation. But the audience knows, sees that something is about to happen. Jaws is out swimming. You see a ripple in the water. You hear ominous music. You know there's something wrong. Suddenly you see a fin. You see a person swimming, about five seconds; and then you cut to see water with nothing happening, no fin, for about five seconds; and then a little ripple. Cut back to the person swimming for four seconds. Back

to the water. Little ripple. You keep cutting closer and closer, faster and faster, and you know something's going to happen, and you're afraid.

"So the beach.

"The first thing is that Jake pulls up [in his old blue car] and you see Gloria talking [to the motel desk clerk], and you can't hear what she's saying, and you wonder what is going on. You're curious. We make you curious by shooting this sequence from across the street, so you can't hear.

"Then you see her start to walk. We pan her across and through our windshield [Jake's windshield]. Now we do a shot of him looking, like he's curious."

It was very important to make the neighborhood of this pursuit not dangerous, Joe Napolitano explained. The area is sparsely populated and at that mostly with old people. It is they who disarm us even as they set the pace of the tango: slow. So when Gloria gets her key from the desk clerk and walks to her room, Joe ordered a nurse to be with an old woman in a wheelchair, "just coming up the sidewalk, real slow." He also ordered a man of sixty-five or seventy with a yellow sweater, a little like Perry Como."

Simple, right?

Not so simple.

"So they sent me a woman who looked like she just stepped out of the beauty parlor! She had high heels on; she had gold on; she had makeup on; I said where's the wheelchair?!"

If you're going to have a murder, after all, the first thing you must do is guarantee that there is no one around who can help the victim. So Al Pacino shoots a Colombian drug dealer to death on a street sparsely populated and at that only with helpless Miami Beach geriatrics. So Joe Napolitano sends someone out to get a wheelchair and takes the gold, the heels, the

makeup off the misinformed female extra, and she ends up bundled under a blanket like the victim of a stroke.

"Jake gets out of his car," Steve Burum continued, "and starts to follow her."

"He's doing this at a certain distance because he doesn't want her to know she's being followed. Immediately, there's a little bit of tension. [Little ripple.] You have the guy's curiosity and you also have the fear that she's going to discover him following her. Because he's a good guy. You like him. His girl friend has been unfaithful to him; he's had claustrophobia; he's lost his job; a lot of bad luck. So you feel sympathetic to this guy and you don't want him to be caught, and embarrassed again.

"He's following her. You don't lose her in the shadows. You play her out in the open. Him too. Because there is more peril to him if he's out in the open because if she turns around, he is going to be discovered. If she asks what he's doing there, what does he say? 'I've been looking through a telescope, watching you masturbate?' You shoot her in the open, directly as Jake would see her, to maximize the viewer's sense of danger. You don't shoot what Brian calls an objective shot or what I would call a shot from the audience's point of view. This is the character's point of view. You're right in Jake's shoes. [Watching the swimmer's unwary legs, kicking underwater, the way Jaws sees them.]

"You shoot her walking down the stairs. You lose her for a minute. Where is she? Oh, there she is. She goes to her room.

"Jake can't follow her so he goes down to the beach. Now you see her behind him. You know he wants to turn around and look at her, but she's looking at him [leaning out over the terrace railing] so he can't turn around. [Tension.] Does she realize what is going on? [Tension.] All the camera is doing is having him in the foreground and her in the background, and you can

see them both clearly. It's an objective shot, an audience point of view shot. But psychologically, you are still in the shoes of the guy who's watching.

"He finally turns around. He thinks maybe she might recognize that he has been following her. So he steps behind a little tent. This shows that he feels guilty about what he has been doing.

"You see her pacing back and forth. You don't know why she's pacing back and forth. But she's so absorbed in whatever is happening to her that he realizes it's okay for him to come out from behind the tent. [Calm water. Relax.]

"All of a sudden she goes out of frame and you see something above frame. The camera follows his eyes. [What's it going to be? Jaws? The Indian who was also watching her at her house, who also followed her to the lingerie store?] It's these people going across out of their room at the motel, carrying luggage. [Calm water. Exhale.] Now Jake has seen that the coast is clear, that she is not paying attention, that she is sitting there waiting and looking nervous.

"Now we do the big crane shot where we bring him all the way across the beach, up the stairs, faster and faster, and he gets onto the terrace above the terrace above her, and finally hears her side of the conversation she is having on the telephone. We use the crane because we want to see the environment, the relationship of where she is to where he is. It's an objective shot. Eventually, out of that same shot, you're going to reveal where the Indian is.

"So you get him into position above her. Now you cut down to her and you see her walking back and forth. You're in his point of view again. You hear part of her conversation, and you realize that she's been jilted by her boy friend [who was supposed to meet her at the motel].

"Now you feel sympathetic for her, because first of all, her

husband beats her up, her boyfriend stands her up, she has to masturbate to get off. But she's a beautiful woman. Why should that be? There's a terrible injustice here!

"This is what Jake feels. We're in his shoes.

"By putting him on a high level and her on a low level, it gives him a certain amount of psychological power. You're setting up a significant dynamic right there, which is about to be paid off.

"Now. The Indian. The audience sees the Indian before Jake. We do that with a geography shot. We've had the point of view of her walking back and forth. We've had the reverse of that—him looking down at her. Now we cut back to another objective geography shot where we see him on top, her on the bottom, she makes a cross out and he makes a cross out, and out of the bushes comes the Indian.

"The audience sees the threat. And they say, 'Oh, oh, there's that Indian again.' [No little ripple this time; this time it's the fin!]

"Now Brian has an option. He can cut into a close-up of the Indian, which he probably will not do, because the Indian's already been revealed, you don't have to bump it out. [Burum was correct. Brian and Greenberg did not use the close-up option.] Or he could cut to Gloria again, and we'll go: 'There's the girl. She doesn't see anything.' Or he can cut to Jake. 'There he is,' we say. 'He doesn't see anything. He's still seeing the girl.' You can hold this situation in four or five cuts if you want to [Swimmer. Water. Jaws, Swimmer. Water, Ripple. Swimmer. Water. Fin.], building the suspense in the sequence.

"Now. You let Jake in on it. He hears the Indian coming down the stairs. One of your characters realizes there is a potential peril. [Swimmer! Watch out! You are not alone in the water!]

"Before you know what Jake is going to say, Gloria has hung

up the phone. We see her going down the steps onto the beach, and we cut to the Indian going down the steps onto the beach, all shot from Jake's point of view. Who knows what's going to happen? Now Jake's stuck. He's got to reveal himself.

"Now the tension is: is he going to get to her to warn her before the Indian gets to her? So: how to shoot the tension. You have Jake down on the beach, and Gloria is ahead of him, and he's trying to catch up with her. Now we have a distance separating them. As he goes he is checking for the Indian. We do a side shot where you see the Indian going behind one tent and you don't see him again. Maybe he's ahead of Jake. You go past a second row of tents and you just see a flash of the Indian. Oh, Christ, Jake's *ahead* of him. And you're seeing this from Jake's point of view, shot from the dolly which is running alongside Jake. And then we'll get a side shot of Jake looking for the Indian and another of him looking at Gloria.

"So there are three shots.

"A view going 90 degrees at the tents.

"A shot of Jake straight on—looking off to the side and looking ahead to Gloria.

"A shot of Gloria walking and Jake trying to get up to her.

"In the second shot, we understand the geography of where he is and where she is. We already have the information that the Indian is somehow lurking behind the tents. Finally, Jake comes within striking distance, he's always been on her back, he's never seen her face really close before, and we do a big close-up. She turns around. She takes off her glasses. He takes a good look at her. And we all say: 'Wow, what a beautiful woman!'

"Now he tries to tell her everything, but he doesn't know how to do it, he tries to blurt something out. ["Someone's following you," Jake says. "I know," says Gloria. The light changes. She's so beautiful. He's so beautiful. All of the danger

evaporates in the warmth of their attraction.] We shoot two close-ups [of Jake and of Gloria]. Then we fall back and do a two-shot [which includes both Gloria and Jake] with them on each side and a row of tents in between them.

"Then the Indian makes a run between the tents. Jake and Gloria don't see him. We see him. The Indian grabs her purse. Now the chase.

"The chase is shot like any other chase. You see the Indian running off with the purse; you see Jake taking off after him. Then you cut to a side shot of the Indian running. So you have a full figure, and a medium shot, and then you have a close-up of feet running, the Indian's and Jake's. Also you have a shot of Gloria standing there with her mouth open.

"Then you have a close-up of the Indian running with the purse. So you have all the elements, and Gerry and Brian just cut them together."

Joe Napolitano made sure there were no extras on the beach who he felt could possibly chase a purse snatcher. He replaced one muscular jogger who might have slipped into the shot with an aging lady in a wide straw hat. That left a couple of kids with kites and two burnished girls splayed out like split fish on the sand. "If there were two guys sitting there who looked like surfers, the audience might ask why they don't just get up and go after the Indian," Joe explained. "But those girls are not going to get up and chase this man who just stole this purse from this other girl."

In the editing room, Greenberg would have the good sense to keep "Gloria standing there with her mouth open" only as part of the background. The split fish girls would never be clearly seen.

"We shoot the first part of the chase with a really long lens," Steve Burum explained. "It looks like both Jake and the Indian are hardly going anywhere. Then you separate the shots into

side shots so you see one man looking like he's going faster than the other. If the other person doesn't enter the frame, then you know there is a great distance between them. Finally, we use a big long shot, where they both come running down the beach, we pan them around and we take them into the tunnel.

"Now in the tunnel, you want to make it as dark as possible. You do that by alternating light and shadow. If you left it all black with a light at the end, the black would compress itself. Also, when they run in the tunnel, it makes it seem that they are running faster, because they are going from light to dark, light to dark.

"And Jake gets to the middle of the tunnel."

Which tilts nauseatingly.

"And he's trapped between freedom on both sides."

Sweating against the cold stone wall.

"And suddenly he can't move."

In the tunnel, as in the elevator and in the graves at the movie's beginning and end, Burum summoned a sickening, burned-out look from the lights, robbing the atmosphere of color and focus. This "said" claustrophobia. Brian loved it.

"I can't tell what the lighting looks like," he mused. "I can't look at the light and know how it's gonna be on the film, but Steve can, all the good cameramen can. I look for people like him. Because I'm such a strong personality myself, I don't want to intimidate the creative people around me. I'm not interested in people who just say 'Whatever you want, you got it.' I want them to surprise me."

Steve Burum sat back and finished his breakfast. It was seven o'clock in the morning and he had been shooting all night long but he wasn't tired. After all, what do you expect, this is a suspense movie, when do you shoot if not all night long?

This is a movie in which able-bodied girls say and do nothing while witnessing unarmed robberies in public places, where

wealthy, gorgeous women tempt civilized men with their underpants, where intelligent men get all torn up because a pretty lady is achieving sexual ecstasy without them.

Intelligent men are making this movie and they have got to make us believe all this nonsense! These are male fantasies so sophomoric that even sophomores don't have them; nobody as well educated and skilled and mature as Brian De Palma or Steve Burum or Joe Napolitano or Gerry Greenberg could be expected to buy them for a minute, certainly not to sell them for a minute—*and that means they've got to sell like they really mean it.*

So Wasson plays it with absolute emotional truth, and Greenberg edits it for absolute emotional logic, and Pino Donaggio scores it for maximum suspense.

Because what they must have first, before they can have their suspense, is the suspension of our disbelief. And the one thing they don't dare do is linger or give us or their characters time to think.

"This whole picture has to go like a freight train," Steve Burum concluded.

The big tango was Brian's metier, his artistic home and the fulcrum of his natural sensibilities. He would have much more trouble with the long expository scene after the murder, in which Detective McLean questions the shattered Jake and ferrets out all the information we need to have.

Who is this Indian, Scully? Did you ever meet Gloria's husband, Alex Revelle? Why do you have her underpants in your pocket, you disgusting little sniffer? Why didn't you warn her if the Indian was following her? It was so long; so much talk. "All bad lines are not automatically removed from films," Greenberg philosophized. "If that were the case, I'd probably be making thirty-minute documentaries."

Brian shook his head over Greenberg's KEM machine in

June. "I don't know," he groaned. "I couldn't figure out how to cut it in the script and I can't figure out how to cut it now." Perhaps screenwriting was not so entirely about "structure," after all.

The most important function of the scene was first, to rebuild the story by establishing Jake's sense of failure and guilt and firing him with the need to know the answers, and second, to give us a rest from the gore we had just witnessed. Therefore, Brian, needing the scene, had shot it with every conceivable visual variation to make it more interesting.

Crane shots. Tracking shots. Pans through the beautiful pale interior Ida had created for Gloria's house. A four-minute poolside shot that had to be so slow, on such a narrow playing field, that it almost did in Big Bob Gaynor, the powerful, sweet-tempered dolly grip.

But all these complex visual devices could not compensate for Brian's homelessness around dialogue, and he had to do what he hated to do—make the scene work in the editing room because he had not been able to make it work in the shoot.

One way to drive to Long Beach from Los Angeles is over the staggeringly high Henry Vincent Bridge. Before you go over this bridge, you hit a part of Los Angeles Harbor and the Navy Yard that seem like inspirations for the worst visions of George Lucas. Pumps operating on their own energy scoop oil out of the ground, creaking and clanking like the monster machines in *The Empire Strikes Back*. Miles and miles of black coiled wire lie ready to strike. The huge railroad yards are packed with toxic green tanks. Aluminum towers supplying the port litter the hillside, riddling the wide horizon, like the stubby barrels of guns sticking up. Above the clanking monster landscape, there are pretty little houses, and by the roadside, clouds of purple flowers.

The main task every day at the beach was to lay a long, taut track for the dolly that would bear the camera; the camera operator, Doug Ryan; the first assistant cameraman, Dusty Blauvelt; possibly Burum; possibly De Palma. This track had to be maybe two hundred feet long; each of its cross ties had to be leveled; it had to be anchored perfectly in the soft and slipping sand, so the camera could ride smoothly and safely. Once the track was down, it took at least two very strong men to run alongside it, pushing the camera and its crew. When they followed Deborah Shelton, floating disconsolately across the beach, they oozed their load along. When they followed Craig Wasson racing after Gregg Henry, they ran it along.

In the heat of the day, most crew members stripped down; Joe Napolitano could raise a Sicilian tan in minutes. But Brian De Palma was dressed for a duck shoot on Michigan's upper peninsula. As the camera backed up for a long shot of Craig following Deborah (what Burum called "a geography shot," all the characters, the hillside, the steps, and the motel revealed), Brian backed up alongside it, moving uncomfortably in the sand, his head cocked, the flaps of his hat down. He had the critical, slightly annoyed look of a woman searching for good string beans in a bin of second-raters.

Inevitably, the dolly slipped off the track. Everyone waited while the grips sweated and heaved and shifted and finally brought the dolly wheels up right again. Big Bob Gaynor wore a little upsidedown hat and a towel in his belt like a quarterback to wipe the sweat from his face. A huge crane on the construction site of a new building in Long Beach hung horizontally like a monolith at the clifftop skyline. The crane was quiet while the grips worked. As soon as they got the track and the dolly operating again, and Brian could finally call "Action" again, the crane went to work again, squeaking and ruining a good take.

Sigh.

Pout.

"Hey, Joe," said Tanenbaum wryly, "you wanna send a couple guys up to oil that crane?"

It was easier to get a rearview shot of Deborah walking onto the beach (Jake's point of view—the subjective shot). The camera was mounted on the ground floor of the motel at cliffside. Four cabanas were moved out to the edge of the beach, so that the shot, made with a long lens, would be foreshortened and look like an endless blur of yellow cabana, blue cabana, yellow, blue, with the surreal sparkle of the ocean in front of Deborah and the light all diffused. A sexy look. A danger look. Deborah was doing exactly what she had been doing in the geography shot, walking toward the water. But she appeared now to be walking right off the edge of the beach into a sea of diamonds. Not only do we see her as Jake sees her; we see her as Jake *dreams* her.

To get a shot that incorporated what Jake sees and what we see in addition to that—the Indian—the crew mounted its camera on the third-floor balcony of the motel. Deborah was below, on the telephone. Craig was up with the camera crew and Brian. Gregg Henry, wearing thousands of dollars' worth of a heavy prosthetic Indian makeup in the sun, was poised on a set of steps a hundred feet or so further over on the cliffside.

Brian fed Deborah what she might be hearing from her faithless lover on the other end of the phone. "I love you, honey, but I just can't come right now, you know I love you, I'm sorry." Somehow Deborah couldn't summon enough distress in response to his gravelly deadpan cues, so he let Craig Wasson take over.

"Listen, baby," Craig said, "I don't think you understand our arrangement here. When I come, I come, and when I don't, I don't."

Brian cracked up. Deborah tried not to crack up. Someone on the crew called: "Hey, Craig, you wanna call my girl and tell her I'm not showing up tonight?!"

The next time around, Craig did a number about his new secretary who was having a hard time adjusting to the job and couldn't handle life and needed him to stay with her, you understand, don't you, honey? The camera, propped on a large orange ladder, looked down on Deborah, who was trying to be anguished in response to all this kibbitzing.

"Right after you called, my wife called," Craig said. "She's here now. I'm kind of in a strange situation. You know I love you, honey, but it's my daughter, I mean, she's got my daughter here, I just can't leave now, you've got to understand."

"The anguish was there that time," said Doug Ryan, the camera operator.

Deborah tried for yet more anguish.

"Where are you?" she whined.

"I'm at home. No, I'm lying," Craig said. "I promised I wouldn't do that. It's my wife, Sarah, she tried to kill herself. I'm here at the hospital right now. She left a note. She said she did it because she loves me. She knows about us. Baby, I love you, I do, but Sarah and I spent a lot of years together, we had a child together, and now she's tried to kill herself, you gotta understand . . ."

Deborah tried for yet more anguish.

"Pathetic," Brian said, "more pathetic."

"Where are you?" Deborah said pathetically.

"You know I have this whole thing about my youth, honey," Craig said. "Remember how when we first got together, every time it was boom boom boom, and now it's every third time or every fourth time? Well, I've met somebody new and it's boom boom boom every time again."

Brian laughed hysterically, turning crimson. Deborah rolled

her enormous blue eyes toward the sea. "I'm trying to get the anguish and *he's laughing*."

Now they moved Craig to the balcony below the camera, leaving Deborah on the balcony below Craig. A plywood floor had been built on the third balcony, so the camera could roll easily. Burum rode it around, looking like a Little League coach; Brian leaned on the railing, telling Burum and his crew precisely how the camera had to move.

"Okay, Craig," he said to the actor below him, "you're going to hear clack clack clack on the steps over there, see the Indian, see Deborah go, see the Indian go, and then you go. Okay, let's walk this by the numbers." The AD's were poised; the actors were poised; the camera crew was tense and ready. The task was to start the shot from Jake's point of view, add our point of view, and see Jake running into the shot, subtracting his point of view. The three actors who were in the shot were hundreds of feet away from each other, each operating in response to a different count, signalled by a different AD. When Brian said "by the numbers," he was being literal; everyone involved on and off camera had to count the beats and move in time, like robot dancers. "Craig, hear the Indian. Craig, see the Indian. Craig, see Deborah. Go, Deborah. Go, Indian. Go, Craig." With every command, the camera crew spun slowly on their dolly, incorporating the action into one long, smooth shot.

So quietly that only Joe heard, De Palma asked if hair and wardrobe were close by on the balcony. They weren't. Joe summoned Marlene and Barbara instantly. De Palma sniffed. He wasn't annoyed. It was just that in the final analysis, he was feeling like he had to remember everything himself. It was his lot. His face was turning scarlet from the sun; so was his bald spot.

"Go, Indian!" (Clack clack clack.) "Dolly! Craig! See Indian. Dolly. Craig. See Deborah. Go, Deborah. Go, Indian. Go,

Craig. Fine, let's do it one more time." To Wilma he said quietly, "Print that."

"Do you need your hat?" Joe Napolitano asked, evening the score.

Brian nodded. It was the only thing he had forgotten.

Gregg Henry, like most of Brian De Palma's murderers (John Lithgow; Margot Kidder; Michael Caine), had an easygoing demeanor and a winning smile. Like Craig Wasson, he was a Westerner and a gifted musician. Whereas Deborah Shelton, the victim, had started off in modeling and was still studying acting, learning her craft, Gregg Henry had started off in stage acting and had a lot of quality fixes to *unlearn* in the flesh markets of Los Angeles. "I became a big sort of flash with Wesley Jordache, with a lot of fan mail, the *Photoplay* Newcomer of the Year Award. It was something I was fighting in certain respects because of this whole idea that I didn't want to be thought of as just another California pretty boy." He mocked his own hang-ups. "I'm a serious actor! Right? So I was caught in the middle. I was scared of the town, scared of the fact that things happen so quickly. I didn't know which way I was going."

He got the lead in a film called *Mean Dog Blues* with Scatman Crothers and George Kennedy, "a sort of bad remake of *Cool Hand Luke*," he said. It didn't do very well. But Gregg felt his luck would hold, that "it was only going to be features from here on in. I was looking forward to a [mocking again] speedy and promising film career, turning down a lot of work on the advice of my management. I think this was an error now that I look back on it. I sort of have a maxim now. Don't turn down anything. That shows you where I've gone."

Although Gregg had worked in TV movies like *Loose Change* (based on Sara Davidson's novel), Frank Perry's *Dummy*, and John Badham's *Reflections of Murder*, although he had been

seen in *The Blue and the Grey*, *Pearl*, and "The Yaegers" and expected to appear in *Boys in Blue* on CBS in the fall, he had never really found a role after Jordache that would make him famous. He had concentrated, therefore, on being a working actor, taking what came along, and getting his artistic kicks from involvement with the lively Equity Waiver theater scene in Los Angeles. As the Off-Off Broadway theater had begun to starve to death in New York, and more and more writers and actors found, like Gregg, that they could make a living working sporadically in Los Angeles, these small houses doing new plays sprang up all over the city. They engaged the energies of the artist between movie and TV jobs. Like Pete, the calisthenics coach, they kept you in shape. Maybe they also kept you sane by preserving your memories of a time when you were an actor, with sculpted lines to say and a point to make, and not a robot dancer counting beats in a big tango.

The Indian makeup that Gregg wore to stalk and ultimately murder Deborah in came in eight pieces without the chest, which was another whole piece. It was created by special effects makeup man Tom Burman (who had started out on *Planet of the Apes* and was now a veteran of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and *Cat People*). It was applied by Tom and his assistant, Bari Dreiband, for about three hours every time the Indian had to shoot. "We did sketches," Tom recalled, "and then did photographic overlays of Gregg, and after approval of the design we sculpted it on a life mask full-head impression, and then after approval of that we split the full sculpture into sections."

Each of these pieces was made into a mold. Rubber was foamed up, put into injection guns and injected into each one of these molds, and then cured. The pieces could only be made once a day, because it took five hours to cure the rubber. The pieces were assembled and fitted over Gregg's face, and then makeup was applied to them. Thus, he had a jointed face that

moved as his expression changed, leaving his eyes, ears, and mouth free. The chest piece was fitted over his body, then further masked and molded with a black net shirt. He always wore reflecting sunglasses. The heavy makeup that covered the Indian mask face had a castor oil base; regular makeup would have attacked the rubber.

Bari and Tom stood over Gregg, pitting the makeup with toothpicks, adding red here and blue there. Then they added the wig; every single hair woven in separately; a masterpiece. Then the teeth were added. They were brown and yellow and black, they were rimmed with gold. They were really awful, and made grinning one of Gregg's special pleasures.

Tom Burman, who knew Brian from *Phantom of the Paradise*, recalled as he patted the Indian's acne into place that "we had metal teeth for the Phantom and this crazy helmet, and, ah yes, he was squashed in a record press that had punched a 45 record on his face."

He gave Gregg Henry, now transformed into the Red Vengeance, a sip of water through a straw, which was the only way Gregg could drink it. "I try to keep from sweating," Gregg said from under the eight pieces.

A young mother was confronted with her little boy screaming in terror because he had witnessed a bit of episodic television—"Starsky and Hutch," was it? perhaps "Star Trek?"—in which someone gets killed. Blood. Gore. Urgent, throbbing music. "He's not dead! He's not dead, honey bunny, he's not even hurt, the blood isn't real, it's tomato sauce, after they got through shooting his murder, the director yelled 'Cut' and they all went out and had lunch. Please, honey, don't cry any more." She cuddled her baby and rocked him and stayed with him through the rest of the program so he wouldn't be afraid and every time a gun went off she said, "It wasn't a real

bullet,'' and every time a car skidded into a wall and crashed in flames she said, ''It wasn't a real driver, it was just a dummy, a stuffed doll.'' In the credits she found the name of the actor who had been ''killed'' and for months afterwards combed through episodic television, looking for him again. And she found him finally, playing another role. ''Look, honey,'' she said to her little boy, ''there's the man you thought was dead. See? Now he's playing a piano salesman. I told you he wasn't really dead.''

But the little boy didn't need further assurance. His first hysteria was long gone. He was calm now. He had been initiated into the great American visual code. Now he would be able to watch real people getting killed with real bullets and real blood during the best-televised war in history; he would be able to watch real houses go up in real flames with real mothers crying for babies lost. And he wouldn't really believe it was real for a very long time, having first learned to believe it was false.

In our time and country, the whole struggle to mature and become an adult could be said to hinge on the personal experience and consequent recognition of real pain and anguish. Thus, the youth of America were always delighted to learn that, once again, Mom was right, it's not the real thing.

''We don't want to see a real murder,'' Gerry Greenberg said. ''Brian wants to make it happen so we can detail it and make it cinematic, larger than life. Because if it's bigger than life, life is not being lost. Somehow.''

The blood that dripped and blotched on Deborah's lovely blue kimono is called Reel Blood, and Jim Tyson of men's wardrobe says that despite some hotness of color, he still likes it best because it comes out in the wash. The drill does not really enter her body; they were just faking it, honey bunny.

''They made a sort of C-shaped metal bar,'' explained Deborah. ''It was nailed to the floor under me and it came up and over

my solar plexus and the drill bit was welded to it and then they stuck the drill on top of that.'' And then they shot it from directly above, so it looked like Deborah-drilled-to-death.

And then they shot it from directly below, so Craig could see the drill bit come through the ceiling with her Reel Blood.

''This picture deals with reality and unreality all the time,'' Steve Burum says, ''it moves back and forth between them. You start out with the unreality of making the [vampire] picture, which is presented to you as real. It's done very colorfully and romantically. Then Jake walks out of the movie studio and it stops being romantic because he hits reality. You shoot the reality differently. Not such warm colors. More blue. Instead of the windows being perfectly balanced, they're burned out. You let them be overexposed, so there's a hot, grungy feeling. The composition of the shots, instead of being perfectly balanced, becomes stressed, a little asymmetrical. Even Jake looks less good in the harsh light of reality. When he gets into Sam's house and Sam shows him the girl, you slip back into a romantic style. Instead of wide-angle lenses to throw the perspective, instead of having everything very sharp, you use a long lens to compress the depth and bring the background closer to the foreground. Everything becomes softer. Rounder. Friendlier.''

So the shooting convention, the Visual Code, is set early in *Body Double* as in life.

Reality is Jake Scully coming home and finding his girl friend in bed with another man. Harsh. Grungy. Accurate perspective. Blue light. Glare without glitter.

Unreality is watching Gloria Revelle walk out onto the beach. Bring the ocean closer to the foreground. Warm up the light. Softer, rounder, ''friendlier,'' says the cinematographer. Glitter without glare.

''The reason I chose to do the romantic scenes with a compressed lens,'' Steve continued, ''is because the first time you

see the girl is through a telescope. It's very, very compressed. Even when the girl is not being seen through the telescope, you still want to keep the romantic convention. You don't want to use the telescope to perceive it, but you want to convey the same feeling, which is that the woman is doing something erotic and sexy that arouses you."

He smiled. "And then," he said, "you keep the same wonderful feeling when she is being murdered."

The compression which was once romantic becomes a nightmare.

A woman is walking toward the ocean; she walks away but grows no smaller. Look at her; she's bathed in diamonds. A man is running to save a woman from being murdered. He runs toward her but grows no smaller. Look at him; he's getting nowhere. The woman is going to die, and it's because he couldn't reach her in time.

On his end, Greenberg would expand the murder—not to prolong the agony of Gloria, but to make space for Jake to try and prevent it from happening. "What Jake hopes for is not that the murder will stop, but that the murder will continue," Greenberg said, "that this woman will somehow hold on so he can race to the house and save her."

So the editor uses cross cutting; parallel cutting.

Gloria's being murdered. Jake is trying to get there. Gloria's being murdered. Jake is trying to get there. The drill gets closer. The dog attacks Jake. Drill. Snarl. Drill. Snarl. Gloria falls. Jake falls. The drill descends. The dog bites. Gloria bleeds, Jake bleeds. "The question, of course," said Greenberg, "is how long can you go on like this before the audience says 'Come on, already!' "

The murder functions as the end of the tango; but under no circumstances can it function as the end of the movie. Therefore, something else has to start happening while the murder is going

on . . . in this case it is Jake's failure to stop the murder. "That's Brian's talent," Greenberg said. "You start a whole new movie in a place where you never thought it was going to happen." The murder ends. Gloria is dead. But we who share Jake Scully's point of view are still suspended. We are forced to ask the questions, as Panofsky pointed out, inherent in the mystery form: "What has happened before?" and "What will happen in the future?" Which is precisely why Detective McLean asks them for us.

De Palma's story telling, his visual technique, and Burum's and Greenberg's manipulations with the light and the cut do more than make the mystery proceed. They bring us and Jake Scully to a not-so-subliminal conclusion.

That the way the woman is beautiful, the murder is beautiful.

That the way the woman is unreal, the murder is unreal.

What the visual code of the times wants to know is: *is the murder unreal enough?*

One of the least "real" murder weapons Brian ever used was the chain saw in *Scarface*. However, since the characters were so convincing, the weapon seemed as real as breakfast. Al Pacino's sidekick, who gets dismembered in the bathroom, would be remembered as a happy-go-lucky young assassin grinning at the green card his violent ways have brought him: a thoroughly believable guy. As long as you operate within the visual code that says "Don't believe this; we are only fooling you," you cannot have such real characters. Because real characters will win every time, they will plunge your movie into the dark and uncontrollable deep.

Angie Dickinson in *Dressed to Kill* was too real. She broke the visual code. She belonged to the times, which were newly responsive to women of her age and type. She had, at least potentially, a life besides her sex life. She went to museums. Her son was a brainy young techie building his own computer at

home. She had wild sexual fantasies, but she wasn't in anybody else's, certainly not anybody's sophomoric fantasies. She was unfaithful to her husband and stumbled on VD like a real philandering woman just might. Nothing even remotely funny took the curse off her death. The attitude of the camera toward her was ice cold, as merciless as Albany contemplating the end of Goneril and Regan. "This judgment of the Heavens . . . touches us not with pity." She took the movie too deep, and when she died, we didn't blame Michael Caine, we blamed Brian.

He was still mad about that. "I'm basically making a theatrical melodrama!" he insisted. "I'm using a conventional genre—women in peril—which goes back to the *The Perils of Pauline*! Suddenly, this has become highly politicized. The fact is if you put a man in peril, audiences are not going to be as concerned. If you have Roy Scheider being stalked [he is thinking of Robert Benton's *Still of the Night*, which Greenberg edited], it's not as scary as having a frail woman stalked, it's as simple as that!"

He felt he was going to be in for the same sort of reactions when *Body Double* appeared. So he determined to beat us at our own game.

Body Double is going to be "the most erotic and surprising and thrilling movie I know how to make," he told the Philadelphia *Inquirer*. "The media's gonna go nuts. I'm gonna do all the things they've been criticizing me for!"

Little brush fires immediately broke out in the press.

In March in the L.A. *Times*, Joyce Sunila Holt wrote: "De Palma can't wait to show us the depths of his contempt for women . . . when the movie comes out, some of us will actually be convinced that there's something daring and deep about the spectacle of a sexy woman paying a grisly price for her sins. De Palma will pose and strut for reporters, winking his superiority to his material and dragging poor Alfred Hitchcock in as an

accomplice. The hip press will call his bag of camera tricks 'Genius' and women will watch the whole circus in sad silence, hoping against hope that if they don't go see the movie, it won't hurt them.

"But it will hurt them. . . ."

Brian had his answers all ready, even before he was finished shooting the movie. "They say, I don't like your movies, how can you make movies like that? I say, hey, you make your own movies. You want to participate in this? Come on up here. Don't tell me how to make my movies, we live in a free society. You think somebody *gave* me this movie? You have to struggle to get it and work as hard as you can, and this is the way I see the world, and if you don't like it, tough!"

Why should he waste a minute worrying about what Women Against Pornography would say, or any of the nation's feminist critics would say. He didn't care what *anybody* said, he said.

However, for *Body Double*, he gives Gregg Henry's Indian a drill so huge that Gregg has to practice with it for an hour before he can believably carry it around the set. Not only is the drill unbelievable, the Indian is unbelievable. Look at that face, that's not a real face! Burum can keep Gregg in the shade all he wants but that face falls within the visual code; it *masks* a real human being.

Brian gives Deborah Shelton's Gloria every opportunity to run away and save herself in mid-murder but then refuses to let her do so. "I kept saying: Brian! Can't I kick him in the shins? Can't I clobber him with the phone? The lamp?" Brian just laughs. "No. No. Ask me again, Deborah, and I'll rewrite the scene with the Indian hitting you over the head with a *bat*! Now come on! All these years of planning and you want me to scratch this?!" At no time is a psychologically accurate character permitted to argue with the net effect of the filming.

The Indian starts to strangle Gloria with the telephone cord.

She almost passes out. They fall onto the bed. The Indian cracks his head on the drill and knocks himself out. Gloria gets up, groggy.

Does she run out of the house? Does she break a window and scream for help? Does she head downstairs for the kitchen knives? No, she makes a phone call. The Indian wakes up and stabs her in the back with the gigantic drill. Thus she cannot complete her call.

Of course, that pretty woman has not been stabbed in the back with a gigantic drill, honey bunny, it's a dummy!

"The dummy was wearing this perfect wig," said Deborah. "The wig Melanie wore when she was being me in the window. I went to get a cup of coffee and then I came back to the set to watch and it was so weird to see that dummy, see the drill hit it and the head flip and the hair whirl around and the body jerk . . . it looked just like my hair . . . it was a very weird feeling."

They put Deborah back into a blue kimono, newly bloodied by the wardrobe department, and Gregg chased her around the apartment with the drill while she screamed and whimpered "Don't don't please no don't no . . . ," or whatever came into her mind at the time, and he stabbed at her with the drill (which was operated by remote control by a special-effects man off-camera), but he hit her breakway sleeve instead of her body and the drill broke the mirror so there was glass all over the floor and finally she fell on her back and Gregg stood over her, motivating himself, he said, by a combination of "rage and fun," and we see the drill, protruding down between his spread legs for the final thrust. "The crew cheered and laughed," Deborah said. "Boys with their toys. And, of course, Wilma was sitting there with the script, practically retching. . . ."

The "weird feeling" that Deborah had watching the dummy get drilled is just like the feeling that the audience is having. It's

a terrific feeling; you've seen your own death and walked away unscathed. Once again, Mom was right. The director yelled "Cut." Joe Napolitano stopped the blood-spattering machine. And we all went out for pizza, having had a good time at the movies.

God help Brian if he ever tries to get serious about substance as well as form and technique. The kids might turn up their noses and go see somebody else's horror show. Wasn't that what happened with *Blow Out*, after all?

Isn't that why, after years of trying, De Palma still hasn't been able to find the studio that will support his film about the Yablonski murders and the coal miners' union? Get into real pain, real death, real evil, and you're beyond the visual code, you've gone so deep that it's too dark to see.

And then you have to *feel* to find your way around.

FOUR

IN THE TUNNEL

"Sometimes you get the bear. And sometimes the bear gets you."
Dusty Blauvelt, First Assistant Cameraman, *Body Double*

Brian De Palma was born in Newark, New Jersey, on September 11, 1940, the youngest of three brothers in an Italian Catholic family. When he was about five, his family moved to Philadelphia, desiring, he says, to join "the mainstream of America." He was sent for twelve years to Friends Central School, a Quaker institution, and attended the Presbyterian Church. His father became a more and more successful, more and more busy orthopedic surgeon. His mother stayed home, reared her three sons, and, according to Brian, became an opera singer.

"Your mother sang?" said Georgia Brown, who was interviewing him for *American Film*.

"Only in her head," he said.

Brian idolized his oldest brother, Bruce, who went to MIT, a brilliant physicist. "My other older brother, Bart, became a painter, but that didn't make any sense to me at all." Brian was programmed toward the sciences.

Sometime during his childhood, Brian was playing with his brothers and he hid behind the refrigerator and could not get out. "A particularly humiliating experience," he recalled, "because I had to call out to my brothers for help." This incident showed up in the tale of Jake Scully's claustrophobia in *Body Double*.

Brian's parents eventually split and built new lives with other partners after their sons were grown. Dr. De Palma once said that Brian's movies baffled him but he was certainly pleased and impressed at their success. Brian once said that if he made it onto the cover of *Time* magazine, his mother probably wouldn't be impressed. His mother never said anything at all.

Home Movies, which Brian made in 1980 during a year's sojourn as a film teacher at Sarah Lawrence, and on which he became partners with his students as had Wilford Leach before him, was supposed to be a parody of Brian's home life: through the glass of Harold Pinter (*The Homecoming*), darkly.

"I was very scientifically oriented," Brian recalled. "I read nonfiction or science fiction. I spent some time with my father in the hospital but medicine never seemed to me to be a precise enough science to be completely satisfying. I was more interested, you know, in math and engineering."

In 1957, Brian stayed up nights and pieced together a project called "The Application of Cybernetics to the Solution of Differential Equations." He got a gold medal for it at the Delaware Valley Science Fair, and won second prize at the National Science Fair in Los Angeles. "I can remember," said his childhood friend Bob Freedman, now a lawyer, "Brian was

always building these things they had back then called a Heathkit. You know, you'd get a kit and assemble it at home and it'd be a tuner or a radio or something. He would have the patience to sit there for hours soldering those things together. I remember coming over to his house and he'd have all his tools laid out on a white towel and he'd just work away all night."

The tools and the white towel reminded both Freedman and the journalist he was talking to, Rick Lyman, of a surgeon with his instruments. In fact, Brian did watch his father operate and although that experience never interested him in medicine, it accustomed him to the sight of blood. So did the old-time religion that lurked in the memory of the family. "When you reach back for mysterious or terrifying images," he told the Washington *Post* in 1976, "you're going to dredge up many more Catholic memories than Presbyterian ones."

In high school, Brian was what used to be called in some girls' locker rooms "a Westinghouse geek." He wasn't cute. He was altogether too skinny. He had big ears and thick lips. He was one of those absorbed, obsessed "genius" types, whom large corporations like Westinghouse were always giving awards to, who concerned themselves with remote scientific matters meaningless to the average teenager. And the average teenager in the fifties was raised on appalling stereotypes. For example, brainy girls with wised-up mothers might be told: "It's the Westinghouse geeks who grow up and run the world, darling, don't turn up your nose." But the strange, otherworldly boys (they were almost always boys then) rarely interested themselves in these natural partners. They already had brainy mothers, for God's sake, they knew that scene. They wanted what they couldn't have.

Cheerleaders.

Brian was flunking physics because of neglected classwork while the helpless, frustrated school administration knew he was

the most gifted science student they had. He was spinning records for the roller skating parties, getting a feel for audio. He was sneaking around making tape recordings of the girls' sex education classes. He was on the chess team, he played tennis and football, he got into the school plays, onto the committees that ran the annual proms. "An electronic genius," said his yearbook, "if only somebody would plug him in." Scattered and spread thin over dozens of activities, he went to Columbia to study physics like his big brother Bruce at MIT, and suddenly everything fell into place.

He found the movies.

It was wonderful.

Now he would never have to run the world.

"You go to a liberal arts college," he recalled, "and you start being exposed to things that never even occurred to you. Like music. I was totally uninterested in any of that stuff when I was in high school; I thought it was a complete waste of time; what I thought was important were differential analyzers. I'd never been in New York before. All these kids I was in school with, they'd take me to the theater. Or to the opera. Or to a movie, and I'd say, gee, this is sort of interesting."

The level deadpan. Ostentatiously laid back. Gee, this is sort of interesting.

"I guess I was impressed that you could sort of construct something that had a world of its own, all from your imagination, that was very enthralling and encompassing and totally unique and could take you from where you were to some other place."

So why didn't you become a writer, Brian?

"Because I had never come from any literary tradition. Because basically our tradition was technocratic. We were all reading technical manuals, going out and buying parts for our machines."

When he was a college freshman, he saw *Vertigo*. "Completely

enclosed universe. Engaged your emotions and your mind. Incredible. I was very much of a pragmatist. I'd look and I'd say, okay, now how do you do that? Like when I was a kid, I'd look at machines and say, let's figure out how to do this.

"I knew a lot about still photography from my science fair days. And I guess it was my brother Bart [the painter], he was taking a filmmaking course at Washington and Lee, and we made a little film at the shore. And when I got to New York, I sat at these film societies and watched all these experimental foreign films and I got all these ideas about how you would make a movie, where you would put the camera. In college I started to do a little bit of acting. I was in *The Flies. No Exit. Time of Your Life*. I guess I was okay. I played sort of character roles. Then I became head of the Columbia Players so I got into entrepreneurial things. And I created this sort of relationship between Sarah Lawrence and Columbia where they did projects together. Our first play was *Ondine*. In fact, I began to spend more time at Sarah Lawrence than I did at Columbia."

The lure of Sarah Lawrence was personified by Wilford Leach, "the most influential teacher I ever had," Brian said.

"Will is a very sort of cool-type character," Brian said. "He has a certain distance with people. I became like his fair-haired boy. He was responsive to my ideas and gave me the freedom to work at Sarah Lawrence, it was very special. He understood me. He understood the aesthetic potential that I had and helped me realize it. From him, I learned about acting, about directing, about writing, about design, about everything.

"I was on probation, always in summer school every summer to make up the courses I hadn't finished. My father and I got into a big argument about what I should be doing with my life. He thought I should be spending my time getting out of college instead of running around making movies, and I ultimately told

him I was going to make movies whether he liked it or not and he stopped supporting me after that.''

Brian managed to graduate in 1962 and went on for advanced work at Sarah Lawrence until 1964. ''It was a great period for me,'' he said.

He made his first feature-length film at Sarah Lawrence with another student, Cynthia Munroe, and Wilford Leach. Entitled *The Wedding Party*, it featured two young actors named Jill Clayburgh and Robert De Niro. ''It was my idea,'' Brian said, ''to get like five directors together to make segmented little shorts, there were many of those features in the early 1960s [e.g., *Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*]. In the original group, Ulu Grosbard was going to do one. John Hancock was going to do one. Nell Cox. Cynthia Munroe. And me. And we were having these meetings every week to find out how we were going to finance this movie, and Cynthia Munroe was going to do her short called *The Wedding Party*, sort of based on my roommate's wedding. Ultimately, the problem was that nobody could raise the money except Cynthia, who was wealthy. My segment was called *Fairy Tale* or something, some bizarre thing, and when the whole idea fell apart, Cynthia's story was basically the best and we decided to do that one as a movie all by itself.''

Munroe, De Palma, and Leach worked together on the film. ''We all did everything. We all directed it. We all wrote it.'' Leach recalled that Munroe would write long scenes which would then be taped, and subsequently improvised by the actors, and then she would be sent back to her typewriter to incorporate the new input. She also did the cooking for the company. ''I became the editor,'' Brian said, ''and Wilford and I kind of co-directed it, but Wilford more or less had control of what actually happened. His word was the final word. I worked on

that movie for like five years. We shot it in 1963 but it wasn't released until 1968."

Although Leach recalled that Brian and Cynthia Munroe had big fights about money during the making of *The Wedding Party*, he did not recall that Brian had any arguments with *him*. Brian remembered things differently.

"I didn't like the lead [Charles Pfluger, whom Brian had discovered originally, casting him in one of the Sarah Lawrence plays]. He played it shallow, as a wise ass, and that's what came across. Will disagreed." They argued as well about visual style. "There was a scene, for example, when you have two guys [one of them is De Niro] trying to convince their roommate not to get married, against a hedge. And we wanted to shoot this in a tracking shot with these three guys talking and this hedge moving along adjacent to them.

"We had students pushing the dolly and student actors who couldn't do the same thing twice, ever, and we got to Take 23 and the camera would come off the dolly and an actor would step into the hedge, it was always a mess, there was no way to cut it together, and I said: THIS WILL NOT WORK. It's not a very interesting visual conception to begin with. Let's chop the scene up, shoot it in little sections, with jump cutting and moving around, we shouldn't be sitting here tracking off the same hedge.

"Wilford didn't agree.

"We cut it together somehow, but Will was wrong, there is no question in my mind that he was wrong, he just insisted on doing it his way. We didn't break up over it. Will had been too good to me, too helpful, to let that happen. It was just that now, I thought I knew more than he did. And I thought to myself: well, now, I am going to have to do this on my own."

Breaking for lunch from his *Henry V* rehearsal at the New York Shakespeare Festival two decades later, Leach thought back

on Brian and laughed. "Brian is one of the few people I know who can say with certitude: 'The world is wrong, the critics are wrong, the press is wrong, and I AM RIGHT!' Everybody else I know goes through the torments of hell and says, gee, I guess they're right, maybe I didn't do my work that well. But Brian says they're idiots. Now that I think about it, I don't recall him ever having any self-doubts." He thought about it. "No. Never. Even when there's nothing wrong with being wrong, Brian has to be right."

While he was getting his MA at Sarah Lawrence, Brian supported himself with various fellowships, including one from MCA, at that time an active patron of film and TV talent. He augmented his income by making documentaries for the NAACP (about legal defense lawyers during the integration of the South) and the Treasury Department (about bank examiners). He had little difficulty selling these projects or maintaining control of them. "I was always good at talking people into things," he said. "It's always the same process, whether it's a low-budget film or a studio film. You have to talk people into putting up money for your projects."

("One day I saw Brian rushing by," said Leach, "he had a motorcycle and a delivery man's outfit. What are you doing?! I asked. He said, I just called up someone and said I was the producer of this movie and would have a delivery boy bring it over, so now I have to be the delivery boy; bye . . . and off he went.")

Insofar as Brian was influenced by the nouvelle vague, the new wave of European directors like Godard and Truffaut, Fellini and Visconti, he was like all of us, an unconscious recipient of the break with theatrical tradition that had influenced *them*.

In the interwar period in Europe, Antonin Artaud had become the most innovative challenger to the theatrical status quo. He

was interested in breaking down the audience's defenses with images of violence. He studied the ritualistic civilizations of ancient Mexico. He wrote a book called *The Theatre and Its Double*.

"The great myths are dark," he said, "so much so that one cannot imagine, save in an atmosphere of carnage, torture, and bloodshed, all the magnificent fables which recount to the multitudes the first sexual division and the first carnage . . . in creation." He wanted the masks of the classic stage to fall, with their heroic scripts, "impelling men to see themselves as they are," revealing "the slackness, baseness and hypocrisy of the world."

Artaud's theater was called "The Theatre of Cruelty," its purpose to so immerse the audience in its own monstrousness that the viewer would go home convinced of the need to change. Like Kubrick's hero in *A Clockwork Orange*, forced to O.D. on images of barbarity he himself had once found so delightful, the viewer would be "cured," pacified, purged, and transformed.

It isn't surprising that Artaud died insane, like the Marquis de Sade. But what is really overwhelming is the way the Nazis, exploiting ancient Teutonic myths and playing the stage of the world, knowing nothing at all of Artaud's fringy theatrical philosophies, fulfilled them. And how the viewers—the postwar generations—were neither cured nor pacified, purged nor transformed by what thy had seen.

Frank Capra recalled the impact of George Stevens's photographs of the piled bodies at Dachau, the junked flesh, dead babies strewn in the mud. He was being interviewed on a Bill Moyers program, an old man trying to make clear to an audience whose sensibilities were blunted by a forty-year interval how he had felt then. "I couldn't believe there was this kind of savagery in the world," he said.

In June of 1984, it was announced that Alfred Hitchcock had

edited together footage amassed by the British Army at Bergen-Belsen, footage so horrific that it had been supressed all these years.

What was inherited by people younger than Hitchcock and Capra was the feeling that the savagery had changed nothing, that the universe would now be perpetually morally empty. What was inherited were the pictures.

Was it not the absence of pictures that had enabled the Turks to deny the Armenian genocide to the world and their own children for decades? Was it not the plethora of pictures that prevented the Germans from doing the same thing? How would any of us ever have understood the enormity of Hiroshima and Nagasaki without the pictures?

In the sixties and seventies, the children of the European war experience would be making movies that depicted the empty moral universe. Their technique would be informed by television, another child of the war, and would be called *cinema vérité*. Violence, like women, would be objectified and brought to new aesthetic heights by American filmmakers—e.g., Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch*—in an effort to make violence meaningful again. But the gap between Artaud's theater dreams and the world's reality had been closed by events. Cruelty created no catharsis anymore, as it had in *Medea* or *Coriolanus*. It had become the plain truth. You could make documentaries about it, leaving it plain. Or you could accept it into your visual vocabulary, and even if you could never again infuse it with meaning, something Brian knew, you could at least infuse it with beauty—which was what Brian did, and all his generation with him.

Mix into this pot of influences from around and abroad and before the cinematic story-telling techniques of Alfred Hitchcock.

Mix in the gaudy sexism of the New Left. (''The position of women in this movement,'' said one SNCC leader, ''is prone.'')

Mix in the willingness of the girls of the 1960s to believe that,

and live with it, *and serve it*, and you got what Brian De Palma was cooking up in the restaurant where he worked in New York's Greenwich Village.

The Beatles were singing.

Bob Dylan, folk poet of the new nihilism, was playing Brian his records.

Brian's friends were, he recalled, "a pretty nutty" group from the NYU film school scene. There was Bob Downey, who made *Putney Swope* (1969) and proved that breasts, like blood, also bounce more kinkily in slow motion; Paul Bartel, who made *Eating Raoul* (1983), which was about just that; Jim McBride, who remade Godard's *Breathless* with Richard Gere (1983); and singer-songwriter Paul Williams, who would play the plagiaristic Swan in Brian's *Phantom of the Paradise*.

In 1967, Brian linked up with a program sponsored by Universal Pictures to support new talent. He made a movie called *Greetings* with Robert De Niro. It dealt with the draft and the protest movements. Released in 1968, it rode the crest of the antiwar counterculture, triggering the commercial release of *The Wedding Party* and putting De Palma into a deal with Filmways for another De Niro movie, *Hi, Mom!* "The message of *Hi, Mom!*" Brian told Rick Lyman, "was that you can't beat them so you have to annihilate them."

Also for Filmways, Brian developed *Sisters, Phantom of the Paradise,* and *Home Movies*. "Ultimately I felt they were not going to make these movies so I took a job at Warner Brothers directing *Get to Know Your Rabbit* so I could buy my projects back from Filmways."

The message was that you can't beat them so you have to go to work for them.

And that process produced so much real pain and real anguish that it ended Brian De Palma's long boyhood.

* * *

Get To Know Your Rabbit was about a businessman (played by comedian Tommy Smothers) who tries to start a new life as a dancing magician. Harry Blackstone, Jr., was technical advisor and supervised the magic. Jordan Crittenden wrote the script. It was the first time Brian had worked with a preestablished, controlling star and a free-standing script not from his own hand. It was the first time he had worked in Hollywood. "I just couldn't control the situation," he said. "Tommy Smothers started being very unhappy about the character he was playing and ultimately lost confidence in me and the studio and the writers."

To his hometown paper, the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, Brian said, "I plain got outmaneuvered. They fired me and went and did what they wanted with the film." Tommy Smothers didn't want the film released at all. Eventually the studio released it in a limited way, but essentially it was on the shelf, with its young director's reputation. "There is nothing worse in this town than having an unreleasable movie," said Marty Bauer. "Because people think . . . it must be [he reaches for something horrible enough] . . . out of focus."

The next movie that came along for Brian was *Fuzz*, featuring Raquel Welch as a New York policewoman. Because of some vaguely recalled difficulty with the Teamsters, it could not be shot in New York. Brian said he didn't want Welch because he didn't think anyone would believe her as a policewoman. And he didn't want to shoot in Hollywood because "with comedy, you gotta be in real situations, you can't create them on sound stages. At least, I can't create them on sound stages."

So Brian De Palma left *Fuzz*.

And he was out of work in Hollywood.

"I was out of work for almost two years, from 1970 to 1972. I supported myself by writing scripts and developing deals. It's awful. You're working on projects that are not getting made. You can't get a job."

You drive around the city, from one unfruitful meeting to another. If you are lucky you meet other people who are in the same boat. Steven Spielberg. Martin Scorsese. George Lucas. Francis Coppola. They too were having their movies recut by the studios. They too were driving around, looking. "We've managed to somehow all stay friends," Brian said.

When Brian starts telling his California stories, he often slips into sardonic mock dialogues. He plays every part. "They" are irredentist, unreasonable, all-powerful. "I" am realistic, rational and long-suffering.

"Everything is a negotiation. Nobody believes what the truth is. If you say you're going to make a movie for a million five, they think you're really going to make it for two million dollars. They want you to say you're going to make it for a million dollars. So it will wind up at a million five. The minute they hear a number, it becomes a negotiating factor.

"When I made *Carrie*, I came in with a budget of $1.8 million. And they said: 'We want you to make the picture at $1.6 million.'

"I said: 'It will cost $1.8.'

"They said: 'We're making the picture at $1.6.'

"I said: '$1.8, that's what it will cost.'

"They said: 'Fine, you're not making the picture.'

"They were packing up my office. That was it. It was all over. I had worked on it for six months and it was cast and all set to go and I'm being packed up because they want $1.6 and I know it's going to cost $1.8 so I walked in and said: 'Well, guys, I guess it's going to cost $1.6.' "

What did it cost?

"$1.8."

The longer Brian worked in Hollywood, the more successful he became, the more successful his friends Coppola and Spielberg and Lucas and Scorsese became, the more precisely he evolved

the attitude of invulnerability which would help him survive being fired and being threatened and being out of control and being rejected.

"You get control when you say: do it my way or no way. You hired me to direct this film. You think you can direct it better, go ahead, I've got better things to do than to sit here and wrestle with you people. It's too exhausting, it's too hard to make a movie.

"You're supposed to direct. To keep the whole thing together. If they start undercutting your authority, or trying to, then I just say: 'Hey, take it over, it's yours.' I always knew where I was going, I had a lot of self-confidence. And one of the things you learn is that in a profession that's supposed to be filled with professionals, there are very few people who know what they're doing. As a director, I was very well schooled in my craft. And I was constantly surprised that these people who had these important jobs didn't have an iota of an idea about the process of making a movie." He wasn't talking about people like Ida Random or Steve Burum or Joe Napolitano. He was talking about studio executives. The people who made *Carrie* at United Artists. The people who made *Get To Know Your Rabbit* at Warner Brothers. The people who made *Prince of the City* at Orion.

"I worked on that movie for a year and a half," he said, ". . . and they didn't like my approach to the material, and they felt more comfortable with Sidney Lumet. With Sidney Lumet, they could get it co-financed by Warner Brothers. He's a very good director. But I believed they were basically protecting their downside and replaced me so they could get co-financing from another major. I never felt so sold out in all my life. I fought right up to the time they fired me."

Time passes. The blood on the bridge dries. "In the long range, thinking about it," Brian says, "I'm glad I didn't do it.

Because the main character in *Prince of the City* was basically a crooked detective and I would have had to humanize him and justify his behavior and make him a hero and I thought ultimately that was not so good. So, in retrospect, I'm glad I didn't direct that movie. The worst mistake you can make in this business is being too overcommitted to something. Because they'll make you pay for it. By exploiting you; exploiting your commitment; by making you agree to things you cannot possibly deliver.''

In *Scarface*, Brian had apparently agreed to a budget he knew (and he and his agent maintain Universal knew) he could not possibly meet. His relationship with that controversial film had started out rocky. He was going to direct; then once again Sidney Lumet was going to direct; finally Brian did direct.

''The first time I quit *Scarface*,'' he recalled, was about a year before the film was made.'' He did not know Marty Bregman, the producer, very well. He had had only a few meetings with Al Pacino. ''I had just made two pictures back to back [*Dressed to Kill* and *Blow Out*], and I didn't want to plunge into making another movie and I was under a lot of pressure to sort of get *Scarface* together fast, so I said:

'' 'Guys, I can't do this picture right now.'

'' 'Well, what do you really want?'

'' 'I can't do it now.'

'' 'Well, do you want more money?'

'' 'No. I'm under too much pressure. I can't do *Scarface* now.'

'' 'Well, do you want to write the movie?'

'' 'No! No! No! I want out! Good-bye!'

'' 'Now what does he really mean by that?' ''

Brian laughed his hollow laugh and shook his head. Of course, he was in the story, but he was also on the outside looking in, finding the story funny, the conversation ridiculous. Perpetually safe from overcommitment, he would adopt the

disillusioned wiseacre stance and challenge anyone to believe the incredible.

He said, "The most frightening thing about *Scarface* was the character of Tony Montana!"

He said, "That wasn't a movie about violence, it was a movie about the evils of cocaine."

He said *Prince of the City* was an immoral film because it benignly portrayed a corrupt cop who betrayed his friends and got people killed, and Brian was glad in the end that he got fired off that picture because he wouldn't have wanted to make that picture anyway! And when he hears himself beginning to sound shallow, like a wise-ass, and he knows that is what's coming through, he says: "Your ultimate weapon is 'Fire me. Take this picture over; be my guest.' Because that's the thing they're scared of most of all; responsibility. They love to have a director who will take the responsibility. Who will take the fall. Because then, whatever happens, it's the director's fault."

The rap stops; the bravado stops; finally, eye contact. The adult emerges.

"And it is the director's fault," he says.

All these guys were in this tunnel.

Outside, it was a nice, sunny day, but inside, it was very dark.

Outside, a cartoonlike mural painted all around the opening of the tunnel had cranes flying outside a balcony overhanging a blue inlet and a grassy shore. Like the pig farm mural on the pig farm in *Carrie*, this mural was a mock double of its environment. Most of the female members of the *Body Double* crew waited outside the tunnel in the pleasant sea air. Those more immediately vital to this particular shot shivered inside, clammy and cold.

In the scene at hand, Jake Scully would chase the Indian who

had grabbed Gloria's purse and then would be paralyzed by an attack of claustrophobia. The Indian would see Jake's helplessness, take the key card from the purse, drop the purse on the floor of the tunnel and run away, whooping in triumph. Gloria would run into the tunnel to save Jake. She would lead him out to the safety of the open air. They would topple into a sudden embrace and almost make love.

Rows of lights, spaced at regular intervals, ran along the tunnel walls. To augment these light sources, the company also built headers across the roof of the tunnel which were finished with sand paint to resemble the surrounding stone walls and which concealed the special film lights. The tunnel led from the street to the beach, undercutting the cliffs, and it smelled now of fresh paint and old urine.

Craig Wasson stood in one of the pools of light, practicing terror. He clutched at the wall, sliding downward toward the pocketbook so near and yet so far. Two feet from him the scattered equipment assembled: dolly track, camera; cameramen and grips; lights and electricians; Jim Tanenbaum, Mike Seeman, and Rimas Tumasonis with their sound kit. Brian entered the tunnel on squishing sneakers and stood between Craig and the equipment, his head tilted.

Gasp.

Okay. Now pant.

Good, that's good. Let's do it.

They rehearsed with Joe Napolitano running in Gregg Henry's place. He threw the pocketbook down. Craig had to focus on it at a different angle for us to think he was focusing on it. So after the pocketbook was thrown down, it was moved by the props department to another position that would place Craig's eyes in a better direction. "This is a suicide focus situation," Steve Burum said calmly. "Because the camera is moving toward them [the runners] and the cameraman has to keep the

shot in focus even though he's only got four to five inches of focus on the lens. If Doug [Ryan, the cameraman] were outside, he would have this much room [Burum stretched his hands out maybe eighteen inches apart], but in here, if the actor just throws his head back, we're dead."

Gregg Henry came in and replaced Joe.

In raced the runners from one end of the tunnel.

In raced the camera from the other end of the tunnel, the powerful dolly grips scooting it along.

Perfect. Now the close-up.

Craig held his final panic-stricken position against the wall for minutes while they reset the camera for the close-up. "Let's move Camilla and the thermos and Brian's chair," said one of the grips. "The important things."

Brian looked into Craig's face. "Okay, now," he said, "the Indian turns around, does all his action with the card and the purse, leaves the purse and runs. Now look at the end of the tunnel. Look at the purse. Gotta get to the purse."

Wilma, the script supervisor, said that to keep the angles matched between the close-up and master shot, Craig should look for the purse on the right and reach for it with his right hand. These angles seemed strange to Craig: he didn't think the camera would see them as Wilma said they would be seen. "I just didn't want you to say Wilma didn't tell me," she said. She was blonde. She wore scarlet-rimmed glasses. She had a Scots accent. She was a seasoned professional and could type at telex speed. She wrote down every detail of every shot rehearsed by Brian precisely, unto inches. Look. See. Indian. Purse. Reach. From this light to that shadow. Good. Barbara sprayed Craig with makeup sweat. They got a wonderful take.

Craig crawled along the wall, pressing his back in panic against the cold stone. The grips crawled back with the heavy dolly, fighting a slight incline, straining to keep the pace down

and the camera smooth. Big Bob Gaynor wiped real sweat out of his eyes. Everyone else was freezing in the tunnel.

Outside the tunnel Deborah waited in the sun, her hair in curlers. Francine Jamison pinned a body mike invisibly into her cleavage. Marlene combed out her hair. "Okay, Deborah," came the radio command from inside the tunnel, and she took off in her strap heels. The camera raced toward her as she raced toward Craig. She did it again. And again. They fixed her hair. They fixed Craig's hair. The camera rolled back to point A, rolled up to its mark, then back again, then up again. The shots went up and down like logs being split. Hours and hours in the tunnel. The lack of emotion in the scene (which would play very emotional: claustrophobic fits, war whoops of victory, passionate embraces) and the mechanical programming of the shots and movements did not incite anyone to be greatly absorbed. The director himself looked less than interested. Any participant who took this endeavor home with him and worried about it would have been making a grave mistake. Professionalism and a gracious froideur, perhaps a healthy self-mockery, were the attitudes to live by in Hollywood 1984. The tunnel was scary. It was cold and dark. It was full of suspicion and treachery, greed and betrayal, stupidity and bitter, bitter disappointment, but you couldn't admit you were feeling these pressures. You had to dig in like a miner; you had to get dirt all over you and hope you'd have a chance to wash it off sometime later in your life; you had to dig in and dig in because somewhere in this tunnel there was gold.

Craig Wasson said he came to Hollywood in 1975 to write the music for a film he thought he was going to do called *Victims of Circumstance*. "And I became that," he said. "A victim of circumstance. The movie never happened." Previously Craig had been working in New York, sometimes as an actor, sometimes as composer-performer. He had a part in *Godspell*.

He had worked in *Death of a Salesman* with Martin Sheen at the Circle in the Square, and with George C. Scott in *All God's Chillun Got Wings*. "I didn't come to L.A. to live," he said. "I just came to do this job. I still had my apartment in New York and, of course, things like this happen all the time, but I didn't know. So, anyway, I came here and I ran out of money and they said they were going to reimburse me for all my expenses but the film never happened so there was nobody to reimburse me and so I blew all my cash that I'd saved up from my year's tour of *Godspell* and I lost my apartment in New York and all my belongings and, uh, this is where the violin comes in . . . and I couldn't afford to go back to New York, I couldn't even buy the gas to go back, I was broke.

"So here I was.

"But I kept my car. I had a 1966 Mustang convertible. Oh, God, it was beautiful.

"But it ended up getting stolen.

"That was my welcome to L.A.

"So just luckily they were casting 'The Streets of San Francisco.' They needed back-up for Desi Arnaz, Jr., in this show where he plays a rock and roll singer who goes berserk, and they wanted a real band on camera so I was the only guy who could act and really play guitar. I guess I just lucked out. So I finally got a job. And the casting lady on that show liked what I did and brought me onto a lot of things and so . . . I survived."

At first glance, Craig Wasson seemed nothing like Brian De Palma.

But as time went on, it became clear that for Brian, Craig provided a present and living recollection. His was the vulnerability that Brian, as a big-time Hollywood director, could no longer show. His recent memories made Brian's come alive again. Remember the first time you were burned; cheated; outmaneuvered. Remember the first time they fired you. The

first time they hurt you in the press, really hurt you, so that you had to watch what you said forever after. Under Craig's tan and smile, a backlog of tension seeped out like a not-too-well-buried toxin insisting on escape. He moved constantly; his hands moved. He gathered happy, chatty crowds around him whenever possible.

Craig-playing-Jake was Brian when "the system" had Brian at its mercy, and Dennis Franz, the vampire-movie director, was "they" giving Brian a hard time.

But "they" are in the tunnel, too.

"They" are practicing terror, too, clutching at the walls; spouting bravado and smiling too much, too. "They" have other faces, other voices, and they blame the system but they know damn well, *they are the system.*

Steve Burum said, "I always hope a picture will be successful. I hope people will come to see the movies so we can all get to do another movie. But I never say 'This will be a successful movie,' because I always guess wrong."

Joe Napolitano also said he was always wrong. "I hated the Beatles when they first came out. I thought they were boring. *Saturday Night Fever* I thought was absurd. I didn't even like *Flashdance.* Or *Rocky II.* Or *Rocky III.* Probably I won't like *Rocky IV* either, you know what I'm saying?"

Once, a while back, Gregg Henry said, he was doing a commercial spot for Mobil Oil. "They had me standing in the middle of the Grand Tetons saying 'We're not going to ruin this forest.' And I backed out of that and lost about twelve grand. For which I was kicking myself about five minutes later. But I personally had my name and my face on that commercial. That's a different thing than if you're playing some character who goes and beats up a woman."

Steve Burum said you could only choose a little in the business. "You take the best thing that's offered; we all have to work. If you happen to get on something that's real good,

you're real lucky. Sometimes you get on something that's terrible, and you try your best because that's all you can do. You can't be snobbish and not work on something because you think it's terrible. You always learn, and the more you work, the more you learn. It's like any other craft, you have to practice it. I dream every movie. Shot for shot. Cut for cut. I can even hear the music, even though I don't know anything about music. I can see how it's all going to look when I first read the script. And I always like the picture I'm doing when I'm doing it. I always think it's wonderful, and when I finally see it put together, I'm always disappointed. It's the shock of having been so close. You see it six or seven years later and you think, well, it's not so bad as I thought."

"I took the Directors Guild test and failed," Joe said. "It's a psychological test, to make sure that when you become an assistant director, you won't punch somebody in the face if they give you trouble. They had questions like: 'When you walk down the street, does it bother you to step on the lines?'

"The only way to do this business is to do it, just do it. So I just did it. And when I finally went back to the Guild, they couldn't refuse me because I had so much experience."

"I was in politics, in the New York City government," said Craig Baumgarten. "I produced a play Off-Broadway. I gave the playwright $10,000 to write an original screenplay and then I came out here and tried to sell it to people, and I realized I didn't know anything at all about what I was doing. But I decided that I loved it and I came back here a year later without a job. I went around Hollywood and tried to get a job. I got a job with an independent producer and learned the business. . . . Now I don't throw anybody out. Because I started in this business on the outside and there was a point where I couldn't get my phone calls returned, and there were a lot of people who didn't spend much time with me who probably wish they had

today. You never know who these people are. So I think it's important to keep that perspective."

No one maneuvered through the nooks and crannies of the dark tunnel, among all these varying sensibilities and talents, with more clarity and enthusiasm than Marty Bauer, the agent. Brian had come to Marty after leaving Sue Mengers, a very famous Hollywood agent who had received a memorable send-up by Shelley Winters in *S.O.B.* Marty had brown curly hair and a big overbite under his moustache, which gave him an innocent look. He talked about how just a few years ago, he was a poor boy from the Bronx, which gave him an innocent past. But who doesn't have that? Wasn't Brian once innocently assembling receivers in his backyard? Wasn't Craig Wasson once innocently dashing about in a 1966 Mustang? Innocent men they all are now like Billy Joel is an innocent man.

"The agency business is the most maligned business in the world," said Marty. "The notion, you know, of agents sitting around at the pool at the Beverly Hills Hotel with, like, reflectors and young starlets going down on them is total malarkey." Top agents like Jeff Berg and Sam Cohn at International Creative Management, Mike Ovitz and Ronnie Meyer and Mike Marcus at Creative Artists, Stan Kamen at William Morris, these people, said Marty, "bust their balls for their clients."

Agents are commonly evaluated by artists who need them on the basis of how mean and terrible they can manage to appear to be. A writer was going to visit a big agent in California. Another writer who knew this agent said, "Oh, he's a monster! A killer! A barracuda! Drinks blood, eats flesh! You'll love him! You couldn't do better!"

This folklorish exaggeration is useful to agents, who need to hook up to talent by whatever myth can be manufactured, and to clients, who then never have to admit it was they who thought up all the mean, terrible stuff in the first place. The trouble is,

of course, that the myth comes true. Agents find they must live up to it or their reputation falters. Clients find themselves taking a certain pride in appearing to be too absorbed with their art to be much good in financial negotiation, years after that is a foolish hypocrisy if it isn't true and a stupid mistake if it is true. Few Hollywood stories have agents as heroes. Creative, talented people who want to work together again despite the fact that they have had horrendous battles can often blame their agents for lousing it up between them. True or not, the initial myth makes a serviceable tool for remarriage, and the bitterest past is often buried at the feet of agents. "Who're you gonna blame?" said Marty Bauer. "Yourself? No. You blame your agent."

So agents are blamed; it is part of their job and often worth more of the percentage they get than any other service they perform. Craig Wasson and Deborah Shelton, Gregg Henry and Melanie Griffith, Brian De Palma, too, all of them had left agents and managers over and over.

"This director I used to represent, who was not a bankable director, had a bona fide disagreement with a producer," Marty said, "and the producer was going to take the movie away from him. I sat down with the director in my house and said, 'Look, Mr. Director, here's the reality. If you want to go and fight this publicly, you are going to lose the battle. It's going to look bad for you. This producer has the ultimate power. Take a conciliatory position and work with the producer and change the movie, but remain part of the process. Because then, you can effectuate 50 percent of what you want, instead of walking away and demanding that your name be taken off the picture.'

"Cut to three months later.

"He tells me he decided to stay outside the process.

"Three months later, I get him another major assignment in another studio. And he fires me the next day.

"He fires me because he says he felt that I didn't stand up for him and fight for him and for his vision of the movie.

"I translated the business reality to him and he could not live with it, so he fired me. What can he do? He can't fire himself.

"I don't take it personally."

More or less exactly at the start of the *Body Double* shoot, Marty Bauer left William Morris and started his own agency. He bought a silver Mercedes and moved into offices in Sunset at the crest of Beverly Hills. They were small offices. One room for the secretary, one for Marty; but they were furnished with big, soft, off-white couches that engulfed you quickly.

Talking a script deal on the telephone, Marty called the guy on the other end "darling" and "putz" in the same paragraph. When he hung up the phone, he became a different person. He laughed at himself, his business, his clients, everybody's fears. He could read a personality. "Brian loves the wheeling-dealing," he said. "He loves it! He's like . . . [what is guileful enough?] . . . Metternich!"

When Marty Bauer was at William Morris, he handled Marty Bregman and Brian De Palma. Stan Kamen at William Morris handled Al Pacino. After Pacino made the commitment to do *Scarface*, he changed his agent and went to Marty Klein at APA, the Agency for the Performing Arts. Oliver Stone, the writer, was represented in the *Scarface* deal by ICM. After the deal was made, he changed his agent and went to Marty Bauer at William Morris. After *Scarface* was finished, Pacino went back to William Morris and Oliver Stone went back to ICM. Thus came and went the four major partners in *Scarface*, the movie that Brian told *Esquire* magazine would give him "dignity," show the world he could work with a huge star and a big writer and a gigantic budget, and he didn't always have to make $10 million sex-and-murder thrillers heavy on technique and short on substance.

"I knew nothing about the Cuban cocaine trade at all," Brian said. "I knew nothing about dealing in an epic dramatic movie with all kinds of elaborate, exotic character types. *Scarface* is basically about the relationship of a series of characters over a period of time, a saga, and I had never made a movie like that in my career."

In the New York *Times*, Vincent Canby raved. "A relentlessly bitter, satirical tale of greed," he said, "in which all supposedly decent emotions are sent up for the possible ways in which they can be perverted." Al Pacino would surely get an Oscar nomination, said Pat Collins of the "CBS Morning News" and Joel Siegel on ABC's "Eyewitness News." "The violence is endless," said Rex Reed of the New York *Post*. "The four-letter words take the place of English, the actors work vigorously, the decadence and perversion drown everything in a vicious grunge. When it's over, you feel mugged, debased, like you've eaten a bad clam."

In fact, the reviews had little to do with the reactions of audiences in theaters. Many adults felt that *Scarface* actually grew tedious; the decline of Tony Montana seemed woefully well synchronized with the decline of the movie during its over-long fourth quarter. But the young people screamed and laughed and loved the big final shootout. To the delight of their girl friends, the boys leaped out of their seats gagging and staggering and shaking in mockeries of death. Vincent Canby, writing about much cheaper horror movies, was "struck not only by the effrontery of the violence but by the sheer joy and good humor they inspire in the audiences, which for reasons I don't understand, are largely made up of couples on dates." Brian's work was on a vastly higher level, "nouveau American Grand Guignol" but somehow when it comes to killing, our kids don't know from higher levels; they are the thermonuclear generation, singing about red balloons.

If there was a message in *Scarface*, about crime or cocaine, they weren't paying any attention.

"Young people don't take it that seriously," Brian said, defending himself against the violence rap.

But he was also naming the dead end of his genre.

"I don't think people who deal in the arts should be important, serious members of society," Brian said. "Art is not a social form. If you want to really help mankind, you shouldn't be making movies. You should be a doctor. An artist is in a selfish profession; you are basically presenting your version of the world for other people to participate in.

But don't you see, that sounds like you don't *care*, Brian.

"It's not a matter of not caring. It's a matter of understanding what is the limitation of the form you are working in. If you're political, then run for office. Kennedy, Reagan, Johnson, they have political effect. What changed because Paddy Chayefsky wrote *Network*? He probably did the most scathing account of television in the history of drama and I don't think the networks have changed one iota as a result.

"Technology changes things. Not art. Softwear. Birth control pills. Television. Those are the things that change the world."

Brian's oldest brother, Bruce, the physicist, had moved on to the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, where J. Robert Oppenheimer suffered his torments of conscience.

"Bruce has become a kind of strange inventor," Brian said. "He creates energy machines." Brian shook his head. Saving the world could do you in. Compared to energy machines, "art" now seemed to him a carefree vacation for the politically uncommitted.

What disturbs him, he says, is the hypocrisy of the so-called big medium—television—for demanding that movies, especially

Brian's movies, be socially responsible when television itself is not.

"Movies are a cottage industry," he said, "a little sidebar event to what is going on in the big tent, on television.

"First of all, television exaggerates everything and distorts reality. Everybody thinks when they see two transsexuals on three talk shows that the world is obsessed by transsexuals and that this is a growing movement in America. Even though there are fifteen transsexuals in the whole country!"

(All of Brian's numbers are mythological; he uses them to make a point; he doesn't actually count.)

"Think, now think about Watergate. I mean, what did the guy do? Is this something our nation should be beating its breast over for years now? The guy was paranoid. He wired an office. Big deal. It's something people have been doing since the beginning of politics. But suddenly because of the media, he's blown into this monster beyond belief!"

He assumes the voice of the pontificating commentator. "And worse yet, he lied about it.

"Well, boy, gee, I wonder how many people lie during the course of political events.

"Something like violence in the movies is a terrific thing for the media to get excited about. They do a show called 'Violence in America' and they give you a resumé of everything from Kennedy being shot to Ford being shot at to Reagan being shot and all the violent scenes from all the movies and everybody's immediately ready to watch the show." (Even as Brian was saying these things, Cable News Network, which had drawn such a large audience with the New Bedford rape trial, was announcing that it planned to offer live coverage of the charges of child molestation at the California nursery school.) "The difference between being a filmmaker and being a television news person is that we don't pretend we're not in business.

Television is a business! But they pretend that they're just these socially conscious people trying to get out all the facts.''

In one scene in *Scarface*, Al Pacino as Tony Montana, the cocaine king of Miami and the southern hemisphere, leaves a restaurant with his cronies in a drunken rage. His wife (played by Michele Pfeiffer, a gorgeous blonde woman with a perfect body and, in *Scarface* at least, almost no lines), has already walked out on him. Montana makes his ''Say good night to the bad guy'' speech, assailing the other patrons (and by implication, us too) for their hypocrisy, their willingness to collude with corruption and reap its profits while publicly condemning the gangsters who do all the work. ''You need me,'' he says. If only they would admit it.

Hearing Brian's anger with the righteousness of those who have condemned his movies while showing clips from the scenes they think are the very worst, one is somehow reminded of ''the bad guy'' saying ''good night.''

Brian says he had a small scuffle with Pacino over that scene. But it was about form rather than substance.

''I thought the scene was over when his wife left,'' Brian said. ''The last line in the scene should be 'If she'd take a Quaalude, she'd love me again.' Good-bye. Out. Gone. But Al said 'No, no, no, this is an important scene!' and I said, 'Al! This movie is getting to be four hours long, we've got to cut something out!' But he said, 'No, this is very important to the character.'

''He just wouldn't let it go.''

Brian says he feels Pacino was right in the end and it was a good scene. He says that working with Pacino was the reason he did *Scarface* and it was wonderful for him, he stretched and grew with it. In his office at Columbia, he keeps a picture of Pacino and himself, deep in discussion on the set of *Scarface*; it's the only picture in the office. ''It makes you better to work with

a great actor,'' Brian said, ''because you've got to be driven to find ways to deal with the input they give you. And they're usually right about a lot of things.''

Whether Pacino was right or wrong about the nightclub farewell in *Scarface* ultimately became unimportant. Because the controversy about the movie never concerned whether the script was pretentious, whether the movie was really saved by the brilliance of its supporting actors. The controversy for the outside world centered around the ratings.

''The worst thing about *Scarface*,'' Brian said, ''was the ludicrous battle we had with the ratings board. . . . I think Richard Heffner [head of the ratings board] has a vendetta against me, no question about it, since *Dressed to Kill* [which Heffner also Xed and Brian also had to recut to achieve an R]. Heffner scares the studios. They're intimidated by him. Nobody wants to have an X rating on their movie, because then the movie gets the reputation of being either violent or pornographic. It's the worst kind of censorship.'' (It should be added that *Greetings* also received an X back when the ratings board first started.) ''I believe in the ratings system,'' Brian told Bob Thomas of the Associated Press in December of 1983, ''as a guide to the parents of America. We have put a caution in the ads that *Scarface* is an intense film because of language and violence. So it's not as if people haven't been warned.''

Aljean Harmetz of the New York *Times* reached Heffner when Brian first made the ''vendetta'' charges. ''That's nonsense,'' Heffner said, ''and how do you respond to nonsense? We aren't waging a vendetta against Mr. De Palma. I never considered anything he has said as a personal attack. The cult of personality looms large in Hollywood and it is difficult for some people to understand that we rate films, not their makers.''

What was at stake in the ratings controversy was a fortune of money. If a film is rated R, it can play in any one of about

15,000 movie theaters. If it is rated X, there are only about 1,000 adult houses that will show it. "No major studio film with major stars has been released with an X," said Roger Ebert of the Chicago *Sun-Times*, "since *Last Tango in Paris* with Marlon Brando in 1972." He explained that many newspapers would not accept advertising for X-rated films and that General Cinema Corporation, one of the nation's largest theater chains, had a clause in many of its leases prohibiting the theaters from playing X movies.

Brian went to the ratings appeals board. He had recut his movie four times. His appeal was granted by a vote of 17 to 4. "If I had lost the appeal," Brian said in the press, "I would have taken a lawsuit all the way to the Supreme Court."

A year later, in production for his new movie, Brian predicts, "There's going to be quite a battle over *Body Double*. It's shaping up."

He swears he doesn't want this battle.

He swears that the *Scarface* X created the worst anxiety of his life.

So why does he say to Lynn Hirschberg in *Esquire*: "If they want an X, they'll get a real X! They wanna see suspense, they wanna see terror, they wanna see SEX—I'm the person for the job. It's going to be unbelievable . . . Brian De Palma's *Body Double*! I can't wait!"

Why do you talk like that, Brian?

"Because I was annoyed!" he yells. "You go and submit something of yours and have these guys come down and say 'This is a brilliant piece of writing but you've got too many adjectives and adverbs; because you're so good, we want you to be less good; because our board of whoever-they-are has decided that we have to rate this book in such a way that nobody under seventeen can be allowed to read it! It infuriates me! It infuriated me then! The masturbation and the drill in *Body*

Double, that's all they're writing about, even before the movie is made! And as soon as *Body Double* comes out, we'll go through the 27 thousand shows on violence and the movies, and everybody will get up and talk about 'what's happening to America,' and there's a sick case here where the young boy saw this movie and went out and did thus and so and isn't it awful. . . . You know, psychopaths go out and kill people for the strangest reasons. They don't have to see a movie to get them started. Anybody who has had any first-hand experience in any kind of violent situation knows there is absolutely no relationship between theatrical violence and real violence. [Steve Burum, gagging, walks out of the U.S. Army screening room.] The use of murders in movies is aesthetic stuff. Motion. Form. Shapes. The challenge is how do you dramatize it so that each one is different. It cannot become pedestrianized. [Like the junked corpses at Dachau in George Stevens's photographs, horrifying young Frank Capra.] If it does, you should move on to something else."

But in *The Odessa File*, Jon Voight is pushed in front of a Berlin subway train, and it was said that one New Yorker pushed another New Yorker in front of a subway train because he saw that movie. And *Psychology Today* reported that men who saw *I Spit on Your Grave*, which got an R, and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and other such atrocity films grew inured to the idea of rape and castration. These are the exceptions, Brian says, the responses of "susceptible minds."

"The most violent scene I ever saw," he says, "was in *Deliverance*."

In *Deliverance*, based on James Dickey's novel, some businessmen go camping on a wild river in Georgia. Ned Beatty. John Voight. Ronny Cox. Burt Reynolds. Beatty and Voight meet up with a band of sadistic hillbillies who rape Beatty and

make him squeal like a pig and ride him through the dense forest while his friend, Voight, tied to a tree, looks on helplessly.

His detractors will instantly say that Brian De Palma only winces at the rape in *Deliverance* because the victim is a man, an overweight, straight man. But in truth, no one, male or female, gets raped in Brian's movies. Angie Dickinson in *Dressed to Kill* has a fantasy about being assaulted in her shower, but the attacker is a monster, not a man, and he soon disappears into the steam.

No, there may be something deeper that Brian has against the violence in *Deliverance*, and it has to do more with the story itself than with the violence. *Deliverance* is about the testing of men and the getting of machismo. And, unlike Sam Peckinpah, our chief "artist of atrocity" fifteen years ago, Brian has never been interested in machismo. The friends he made when he was first starting out in Hollywood fifteen years ago all document the stupidity and self-destructiveness of the male myth. Martin Scorsese did it in forever in *Raging Bull*. Like rape and the brutalization of children, the idea of killing as rite of passage to manhood is not in his repertoire.

Who cares if Jon Voight learns to shoot his bow and arrow as effectively as Burt Reynolds and finally kills his friend's attacker? Who cared if Dustin Hoffman finally fought back in *Straw Dogs*? To the Whiz Kid directors raised on the lessons of Vietnam, such "victories" are foolish and useless and ultimately victimize men.

Talk to the Westinghouse geeks *you* know. Nobody remembers the down side of machismo like they do.

The worst thing that happened to Brian during *Scarface* was that he lost his marriage. J. Trachtenberg in *The Wall Street Journal* came right out and asked if Nancy Allen was gone because Brian had not cast her in the movie. "I don't

think so," he replied. "I really don't know why two sensitive, intelligent people get divorced. I know I didn't marry to end this way. I had time in my life for her, I went home every night."

Among the guys in the tunnel, the bad vibes that echoed still from *Scarface* had nothing to do with Xs or Rs or broken hearts. They had to do with money, like everything in the tunnel.

Scarface was budgeted at $18 million. Brian and his agent, Marty Bauer, insist that a more realistic budget would have been $22–25 million; that the movie could never have been made for less. So *Scarface* comes in at close to $25 million, and this is the biggest problem Brian has; it could keep him from working; it could keep him from making the movie he wants to make.

Howard Gottfried stopped kidding around and explained his understanding, as a seasoned producer, of how and why movies go over budget and the studio does nothing to prevent it and the director is blamed.

He says it is a matter of will.

"The only people who can really take an effective position about a budget which is going haywire is the studio," he said. "And usually when that is happening, it's because of the director or the star. Once a director starts a movie, he's got the edge on the studio, for good reason. He's got two to three weeks shooting in the can; the studio already has a lot of money invested, a few million. So at that point, they're less likely to say to him: 'Forget it. We're not going to do it. We're going to replace you.' Invariably, the studio has been unwilling to face up to their responsibility, their obligation, in fact, to try and effectively alleviate such a situation.

"When a budget goes out of control, it's because the shooting schedule has gone haywire usually, or because there are a lot of changes going on during the production, or the director is

unusually slow or doing many, many too many takes, or the star is not showing up on time, creating additional expenditures of huge amounts, and the studio gets very upset.

"So they invariably go and talk to the production manager [Ray Hartwick on *Scarface* and on *Body Double*]. But he is subject to the control of the producer, the director, and everybody else.

"So sometimes they'll go and talk to the producer. To some minor extent, the producer can be effective by talking to the director, talking to the star, saying 'You can't, you can't.' ["We can't be in this tunnel another day," Howard was heard muttering after the lights blew. "We can't. We can't."] The problem is that in the huge majority of situations, the director and/or the star are much more powerful than the producer. The producer goes to the star and says 'No more, buddy,' and the star picks up the phone and says to the guy up there at the studio 'Listen, it's either me or the fucking producer off this set starting tomorrow,' and you'll never see a producer thrown off a set so fast in your life.

"The only people who can do anything about the situation are, ultimately, the studio people. But they invariably refuse to do anything about it once the picture has started to shoot.

"The reasons for that are twofold.

"One, they are fearful that the director or the star, who are *really* in control of the picture once a lot of it is in the can, will simply become more recalcitrant and do other things to make the situation worse. An actor could not feel well. He could be late. He could forget his lines. He could, in the eyes of some people, not perform as well as he might. He could make trouble with people. [Unlike first assistant directors, actors do not have to take psychological exams to make sure they will not punch somebody in the face who annoys them.] He could not like his makeup. He could not like his costume.

"The director could just feel that his takes aren't good enough and do them over again. He could be slow setting up his shots.

"But the studio is in competition with other studios and they all feel they have to attract the major talent in order to do major films, and they are desperately afraid that if they get the reputation among the major talent that they have ever dismissed or fined or taken a major star to court because of what they think is a breach of their obligation to the movie, that this will result in other major talent shying away from that studio. They are so anxious to suck around the major talent and to accommodate them and they're so fearful of alienating them that they allow these things to go on.

"It is my contention that the only way to stop these unreasonable overages is for the studio to bite the bullet and have the guts to say to the star or the director: 'You try to play around with me on this, I'll have you in court for the rest of your fucking life!'

"What are they gonna do, these directors, these stars? Are they going to be sick? Yes, they can be sick. But you can get a doctor to examine them. Can they delay things? Yes, they can continue to delay things. But the fact remains that once an artist crosses the line where you can get him on what could at least stand up in court as a breach of contract, you can really drive him crazy! I don't believe any of these stars, as rich and powerful as they are, are willing to tie themselves up on a law case of this kind, and the studios are powerful enough to do it to them.

"I'm not.

"You're not.

"But the studios are."

"That Brian De Palma is a powerful director is an illusion of Hollywood," says Brian De Palma, master of illusion. "Don't

be sucked in by that. It's Tinseltown out here. Everything is sort of coated and unreal. When you make a movie like *Blow Out* and the movie makes 20 cents, you're verboten. Forget it. Despite Pauline Kael, despite anybody. You can't get a job."

So why don't you do what Francis Ford Coppola has done, Brian? And George Lucas? And Steven Spielberg? Why don't you create your own producing organization?

"I've done it enough to know I don't want to do it. Just running my course with my students [at Sarah Lawrence, where he made *Home Movies*] is enough to exhaust me. Francis and George and Steven are very good creative forces, they see the talented people, they know how to put things together; they don't want to deal with a bunch of insensitive executives. But they're running a business and I don't want to run a business. I want to make movies."

Apparently, there is no way to protect anyone—not the actor, not the studio executive or the agent, not the director—from the irrational cave-in. Contracts certainly don't seem to do it. "I still haven't signed my contract for *Scarface*," Brian laughed, "and the movie's been out for two years! This whole industry is an act of faith."

"It's true," said Howard Gottfried. "Yes, each movie is an act of faith. But it's not that significant a fact because you do have an oral contract, you have agreed on the specifics. The money is moving. Artistic control—who's got it?—that's always settled first. Ballpark money is settled, like salary, yes. What the project is; the approximate time you go into production; the length of the shooting schedule, the approximate budget—all that is settled first, agreed on. What's usually missing are some of the little *pistes* . . . the little items; you just don't get to some of those things."

Like: do the actors have the right to okay still photographs before they are used in the press or elsewhere by the production?

That's a *piste*. So are the amounts of expenses Brian or his actors may have on a certain item; like how much can Brian pay his assistants? That's a *piste*.

For these reasons, big talent often goes into big production without a finalized written contract, and in the end, the contract is just a ritualized composite of deals already made and understandings already worked under.

"We live in a capitalistic society," Brian said, "and success in my world is based on the success of the movies I make. They are successful if they make money and unsuccessful if they don't make money. *Flashdance* was a big success. Five years from now, no one will even remember what it was. *King of Comedy* was not a success. It is probably one of the best movies that Marty [Scorsese] ever made. You have to be aware that if you are a film director, you have got to make movies that are successful or you're not going to be able to continue working.

"I am a relatively successful director. Probably half of my movies have made money, which is very good odds in this business. By relationship with Sydney Pollack or Steven Spielberg and Francis [Coppola], no, I would say I am not as successful as they are.

"I've turned down a lot of successful movies because I didn't want to make them, they didn't interest me. Like *Saturday Night Fever*. And *Grease*. I am overjoyed at the success I have. I am very fortunate. I get to make the movies that I want to make the way I want to make them, with certain limitations."

You can't just produce *Body Double*, Brian; you have to direct it too.

Now that you know something about directing a big saga with a big writer and a big star, we are not going to let you do that again, Brian, we are going to let you do what you did ten years ago. Sex-murder-suspense roller coaster.

Don't tell us Richard Heffner has a vendetta against you,

Brian, we don't care. No more Xs, don't you dare. Give us *Carrie/The Fury/Sisters*.

"I would have liked to make *Lawrence of Arabia*," Brian said. "I would have liked to make *Bridge on the River Kwai*. I think *Act of Vengeance*, about the Yablonski murders, could be that kind of movie, and I've wanted to make it for ten years now; it's been turned down twenty-seven times because nobody wants to make a movie about the coal miners and their problems!"

So what is *Body Double* then? A settlement? A compromise? Maybe a little rest?

"It's a lateral move for me. It's one of the kind of movies I enjoy making. You're not breaking out new material, or cutting into new areas you haven't done before. But it's not boring, it's too difficult to be boring; you're constantly refining your story telling, your cinematic stuff, you're constantly amazed at what the actors are doing, the nuances they bring. This is my territory. If you're going to survive in this business, have a long career, you cannot go out and break new ground all the time. If anybody remembers anything about me when this is all over, it'll probably be that I had a reputation for making movies like *Carrie* and *Body Double*."

So what could he do but make a double of his other movies?

That was what was wanted. That was what could be brought in at a manageable $10 million budget. That was what Craig Baumgarten knew didn't need a star, or a big, expensive writer.

"As a creative person, I am fascinated by the corruption of the capitalist system," Brian said. "I have a certain corrosive vision of society which seems to not be very commercial. I try not to let my vision corrode the movies to the extent that they become so dark that nobody wants to see them. I did that in *Blow Out*, and nobody really cared. The system goes on. The lesson of the sixties is that the revolution becomes a product,

that's how the capitalistic system deals with any revolution, it turns it into a product. You can drop out and go and live in Maine, you do not have to participate, this is not Russia, you have free will. But if you decide to deal in the movie business, you are dealing in a very capitalist-oriented world.

"I have never felt oppressed by it; if I did, I couldn't be making movies. I was talking to Marty Scorsese:

" 'This business is driving us crazy!'

" 'Why don't they make our pictures? Why do we have such a hard time? Why don't people go see our pictures?'

" 'But what else can we do?!'

" 'We can't do anything else, let's face it!'

" 'This is it.'

"This is it," Brian says. "There is nothing else we can do and be as happy as we are."

FIVE

HOLLY'S BODY

"I'm so scared I'm not good enough. Brian said to me: 'Stop beating yourself up, you're great.' And I said thank you. But I don't believe him."

Melanie Griffith, actress, *Body Double*

In one version of the *Body Double* script—part of the scene in Spago that was filmed and then cut—Jake Scully came right out with it and asked Holly Body: "How did you get into the business?"

This exchange ensued.

HOLLY

Well, I tried nuclear physics for a while but it did not satisfy my intellectual desires. I figured fuck films were the next logical step.

(The waiter arrives; pours for both of them.)

JAKE

You're teasing me.

HOLLY

(leaning toward him)

I think that's why I like you so much—you are one easy tease.

(She downs her drink in one big gulp. Takes a big theatrical sigh—)

HOLLY

I'll tell you, Jake, this guy I once knew, he's a psychologist, Jewish guy, real smart—say, are you Jewish?

JAKE

No.

HOLLY

Too bad. I just looove Jewish men. Anyway, he told me that I'm trying to get back at my father—doing hardcore and all. Me, well, I just like the work.

An earlier version of the script attempted to suggest that it was Holly's depressed economic background that had led her into hardcore. She said she came from "Beauty, Kentucky. Population one thousand two hundred. Black hills, black mines, and black lung. The only thing to do on a Saturday night was drink beer or slash your wrists."

This "victim" scenario made psychological sense for Holly. But Brian dropped it when he decided to portray Holly as the victim of nothing except Alex Revelle. What changed his mind was Annette Haven.

Annette was raised in Las Vegas, Nevada, the child of parents who were both Korean War veterans. She came from a long line of Mormons. Her parents were divorced when she was five years old "due to my father's being a jerk, like a lot of men," she said. "They think they can run around on their wives and then come crawling back and my mother is a very proud person who doesn't accept people who come crawling back. It's called: 'You want to screw around, do it on your own time; don't waste mine.' Which I agree with completely."

She said that she and her therapist had concluded that she was not "doing hardcore" to get back at her father. But she acknowledged that it was a fairly common assumption of adult film stars. "Actually, it is rather amazing that a lot of females in the adult film industry tend to come from repressive backgrounds. It's not necessarily that they're rebelling against their fathers but against backgrounds that are religiously repressive, sexually repressive. I don't think mine was repressive. Nobody ever said 'Thou shalt not.' Nobody said anything at all.

"So I watched all my girl friends grow up and nobody ever told them about birth control. This is in the sixties, and these poor girls, because nobody ever told them anything about sex, went and did it with guys who didn't really care about them that much. And they got pregnant. And the guys married them out of duty and proceeded to beat on them or give them another couple of children and desert them and leave them on welfare. If you've ever seen an eighteen-year-old girl with two children on welfare living in a pig pen, then you have some idea of what I'm talking about."

When Annette was nineteen, one of her girl friends intro-

duced her to a producer who asked her to make a hardcore film. "I had a good time, you know . . . and I realized that this would be a very nice position from which to espouse my ideas on sexual education and on sexual health . . . to make statements to the American public and the world about sexuality. And it's turned out marvelously. I've gotten to lecture and write papers. I get to address audiences wherever I do stage shows. I talk to them the way I'm talking to you about sex and education and we discuss politics on the stage itself. So it's worked out exactly the way I wanted it to."

Annette was very sure of her analysis of the business realities governing the relationship between X-rated hardcore and Hollywood movies, as well as between video cassette technology and theatrical releasing.

"Everybody is watching adult videos," she said. "Everybody. I was at this video convention in England and the wife of one of the distributors I was working with there said they had been getting reports back and this is what's happening; if it's happening in England, it's probably happening everywhere like this; people tend to be the same the world over. . . . The ladies watch the films while the men are away at work and the men get together and watch the films after the ladies have gone to bed. People are watching them separately because they're nervous about them now, you know. They'll watch them together maybe next year. Then a couple of years after that, they'll be watching them with their neighbors, and then a couple of years after that, it'll be 'Come on, Mabel, why don't we go down to the local theater and watch this adult movie on the big screen?' It's going to be very interesting to watch how people adjust."

In 1976, Annette enrolled at Clackamus Community College in Oregon City, Oregon, where she studied such subjects as video technology, physics, and electronics. She has since taken courses in computer programming. "I knew that video was

really going to hit like heavily in a few years and it has. That wouldn't be so bad [for the X-rated part of the industry] if you could make your money off video. But you really can't because most of the tape stores buy one tape and they rent it until the stupid thing is in ribbons and everyone copies it, so your actual sales of video tapes as opposed to rentals aren't that high. And then cable doesn't pay that much and so you're losing a lot of money there. But like I said, it's not going to last long."

She derides her own industry for making films without plot or character or motivation, while at the same time she feels that the adult film industry has posed a severe challenge to Hollywood. "Which is why Hollywood is putting more and more sex into their films," she said, "and Hollywood sex is getting harder and harder. They're trying to compete with us.

"Well, they'll never be able to compete with us.

"There is no way you can compete with actual sex."

Whatever may have been the merits of Annette's analysis of business pressures on the film industry, it was true beyond doubt that the line between hardcore and Hollywood sex was blurring. Organizations created to fight pornography were having to redefine much more precisely what they meant by pornography, the better to see where the entertainment stopped and the "danger" began, the better to protect our freedoms under the First Amendment while also shielding the social values, and particularly children, of the majority against minority rule.

Many citizens felt themselves threatened personally by hardcore video sales, all the more so since it invaded homes and neighborhoods much more massively than, for example, burlesque had or the live hardcore sex shows did. People who would not have looked twice at the issue or the material before grew enraged about it when they became parents and/or property owners.

But by far the most vociferous opponents were women. Single,

married, mothers, daughters, black, white, old, young, gay, straight, they all had the impression that pornography was bad for their group.

The feminists among them felt pornography led to an extension of the oppressive gender power structure without which porn would have been impossible in the first place. Those who had not thought porn through politically felt simply that it led to the rape, torture, subjugation, and death of people like themselves and their children.

(Annette insisted that women liked her films because she always played powerful characters who enjoyed sex and chose their partners. In one of her movies, you could catch her pausing to look at the gigantic penis that split the screen and smiling with the pride of authorship, completely in control. Holly Body continued this tradition. When Jake Scully asks her what she wants to drink, she answers, "You. Straight up," strips to her gold teddy, and shoves him onto the bed.)

The most extreme reactions to hardcore video sales were exemplified by an incident in British Columbia in 1982. A group calling itself the Wimmin's Fire Brigade claimed responsibility for the arson destruction of two Vancouver Red Hot Video outlets. They declared: "Red Hot Video sells tapes that show wimmin and children being tortured, raped and humiliated." The spelling of women as 'wimmin' was not a sign of ignorance, but rather a chosen method of taking the word "men" out of "women."

The British Columbia Federation of Women, a broadly based conglomerate of thirty-six organizations, representing thousands of women so moderate that they would never deliberately misspell a word, issued this extraordinarily supportive statement: "While we did not participate in the fire bombings, we are in agreement with the frustration and anger of the women who did."

If anyone had provided legal insight into the confused and imprecise debate over hardcore films, it was the feminists, whom both Brian and Annette railed against at every turn. Gloria Steinem, a leader of the American women's movement, made a clear distinction between pornography and erotica. "The difference is in the dictionary," she said. "*Eros* means love; it implies pleasure, mutuality, and free choice. *Porne* means female slaves. It implies subjugation, degradation, an imbalance of power against women, and the absence of free choice." If we were to have freedom of speech, she contended, then we should guard it the same way we always guarded it—with the codicil that it could not be the pretext for eradicating another kind of freedom.

This philosophy from feminist sources provided the basis for several new antipornography laws that might indeed someday stand Annette Haven as well as Brian De Palma in good stead. Adopted not by states but by municipalities—first Minneapolis, then Indianapolis—the laws posited the notion that instead of having a Board of Censors exercising prior restraint on materials thought to be pornographic, it should be left to individual citizens to come forward and argue that this or that material was hurting them and infringing on their freedom. It was the "I can't go to work without seeing pictures of people who look like me being eviscerated" principle.

Just as *Body Double* was finishing shooting at the beginning of May 1984, *Variety* published a front-page story on the Indianapolis antiporn law, which defined pornography as discrimination against women and declared that the regulation of pornography was now the job of the Equal Opportunity Advisory Board of the city. The bill had passed by a vote of 24–5 because of strenuous lobbying efforts by an uneasy coalition: feminists, fundamentalists, and a group called Citizens for Decency which simply did not want sex stores and porn outlets in their

neighborhood. The very same people might soon be at each other's throats on issues such as abortion rights and who should be president of the United States.

But the ordinance itself reflected Steinem's understanding (and Catherine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin's legal reasoning) in nailing the difference between erotica and pornography and giving citizens the wherewithall to prosecute the latter, while protecting the artist from censorship by prior restraint. Pornography, the ordinance said, is "sexually explicit subordination of women graphically depicted, where women are presented as sexual objects who enjoy pain or humiliation." Also under the definition is material depicting women as "sexual objects who experience pleasure in being raped, tied up, cut up, mutilated, bruised, physically hurt, dismembered, truncated, fragmented or severed into body parts and from being penetrated by objects or animals."

As such laws were refined, they were naturally modified to apply to men and children as well as to women, and, of course, they were challenged in the courts and would take some time to go into effect. But if the standards of the Minneapolis-Indianapolis laws were to prevail, *Dressed to Kill*, in which Angie Dickinson so enjoys being raped by the animal of her fantasies, would have been in big trouble.

The most extraordinary thing about Holly Body's list of verbotens in *Body Double* was that, with some exceptions, it mirrored the list of discriminatory acts in the Indianapolis law!

The first exception was rape. Holly doesn't mention that.

The second exception was lesbianism. Holly tells a friend of Jake Scully's—in the only part of the Spago scene that Brian did not cut—that she doesn't do it with women. Although that's fine if you like, says Melanie sweetly in the spirit

of "sisterhood" (while Wasson panics like Lou Costello); for her own part, Melanie says Holly just can't get into it.

Brian's instinct protected his heroine from the prejudices of the audience. To be the sort of woman no man could fail to love, Holly had to have sexual standards acceptable under the newest codes, she had to be punk beautiful according to the newest styles—"I would never play a punk!" Annette exclaimed—and she had to be straight.

What is not on the Indiana list and *is* on Annette's and Holly's is what they call in the adult film industry "the money shot." Not that Annette and Holly don't do it. They just don't want it done on them.

"When they did the transfer from the softcore nudie cutie pictures of the late 1960s to hardcore, they had to show something that meant that sex was actually taking place," Annette said. "Real sex. So around 1971, somebody came up with the brilliant idea of the come shot. Now this appeals to guys. But females hate it generally because when a guy pulls out and comes he generally comes on the female. Right? Well, who wants to be come on? I don't think come shots are morally offensive. I just think they are unmotivated and dumb."

Annette says that a few years ago, she showed her movies to her mother.

It was hard for her mother to see those movies because she wasn't accustomed to the public display of real sex, and so much oral sex at that.

"What do you think?" Annette asked her mother.

"It needs . . ."

"What?"

"More hugging and kissing."

For Melanie Griffith, a privileged Hollywood kid, playing

Holly Body and researching the role with Annette Haven was sure to be the acting challenge of her short career.

Playing Holly was taking an awful chance.

The press was snotty; the expectations low; the scuttlebutt derogatory.

To become the mistress of the situation rather than its victim required enormous self-discipline and self-confidence. Fortunately for Melanie, she had a long backlog of experience at the object end of the camera.

Melanie's mother, Tippi Hedren, was a model and actress doing commercials in New York when Melanie was born. At nine months, she got her baby a role in a commercial and Melanie had her SAG card. When she was four, her mother divorced Peter Griffith. "Mom was seen by Hitchcock in a Sego (soap) commercial and he flew her out to Los Angeles. She never knew who he was. She never saw him. She was interviewed by his agent and I guess some other people, and then he signed her and then she met him. Hitchcock molded her. He coached her. I hate to say this, but she was kind of like a puppet.

"I had never thought of being an actress because I had only seen it from my mom. As a young girl, I would see her stand at the mirror and put on makeup and do parties and dresses and I didn't like that. I felt that if people couldn't like me for what I was, fuck 'em. I didn't really want to be an actress. I wanted to be a woman. When I was *nine*, I wanted to be a woman. I grew up very fast. I had lots of responsibilities. I got to school on my own and home from school on my own. I had two stepbrothers, and my mother would go away and I would be the lady of the house. I was never physically hurt but I think I was mentally hurt a lot, going back and forth between father and mother and never really feeling all right, never feeling at home anywhere."

Alfred Hitchcock fell in love with Tippi Hedren. But she did

not return his ardor and went ahead and ran her personal life without him. So Hitchcock sent Melanie a doll for her birthday; it was made in the image of her beautiful mother and was lying in a little toy coffin. Clearly, there was a price to be paid if the object didn't love the camera back, and Melanie was learning that lesson very young.

When Melanie was fourteen, she moved out of her mother's house and went to live with a twenty-two-year-old actor. The rationale she offered Tippi Hedren was as follows: "If I was old enough to take care of the house, old enough to drive myself to school—when I was twelve, I started driving—why wasn't I old enough to start my own life? She tried, oh she really tried to stop me."

Her father, she said, was not around. "He moved to the Virgin Islands when I was fourteen. He was on the other side of the world."

Melanie started modeling. She did spreads for junior fashions in *Seventeen* magazine. ("I looked like I was twelve when I was sixteen.") She went for another modeling job and it turned out to be a movie, *Night Moves* (1975), directed by Arthur Penn.

"I told him I didn't want to be in the movies, I'm sorry. Then he asked me to come back. I came back. He asked me to read the script. I read the script. So I got this movie. It came pretty easily to me.

"I remember the first time I had a close-up. I couldn't move. My voice wouldn't come out and I literally could not move my body. And I'm supposed to be this free-spirited young girl who will fuck anything that walks. God it was awful, I was so embarassed. *Then, when it worked, and I forgot me and became Zellie, the character, then I liked it.* That's what got me hooked on acting."

Night Moves got her an agent—Stan Kamen at William

Morris. Which led to *Smile*, a beauty contest spoof in which Melanie was the contestant whom the camera discovered in the nude. "I was still with my boy friend. It was a long thing. I should have ended it then, but I couldn't. I was too attached." She was cast as a youthful murderer in *The Drowning Pool* with Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward. Her boy friend was not working much. "My success was very hard on him," Melanie said.

Like Jennifer Warren and Gene Hackman in *Night Moves*, the Newmans as sympathetic grown-ups became temporary surrogate parents for Melanie. She seemed to remember everything they said to her. "Joanne told me she had three goals when she was twenty. To win an Academy Award. To marry a movie star. And to have a beautiful baby. Those were her goals and she did them all."

Paul Newman encouraged her to study acting. " 'Study?!' I said. " 'What am I doing wrong now?!' I remember before the final scene in *The Drowning Pool*, where Paul confronts me and tells me I have killed my mother, I remember him saying something like, 'What are you doing? What is this girl going through?' " It was real actor talk, the kind you get from coaches. "It was a very emotional scene," Melanie recalled. "I was so confused."

Sitting in the shade at Long Beach, trying not to get tan and ruin the color matching in *Body Double*, she sipped her Tab and her small face grew thoughtful and her mouth pursed up into a little knot.

"Now I think with the movies that you do, you work out something in your karma, in your life. Because if you choose to be an actor, you're always playing other things. I always played little nymphettes. So I think that I did those characters to work something out, I think.

"I went to New York on a publicity junket. Nobody told me

you don't tell the absolute truth, no one helped me. I am real angry about that. In this business people will just let you flounder, like a fish out of water. If you can get back in, then good for you, kid. If you die, gee, that's too bad.

"I made a fool out of myself. I don't know if I really made a fool out of myself, but I did *to me*. When I turned eighteen, I did a layout for *Playboy*. They gave me $10,000 to do it. What was I going to do, say no?

"I'm sure my parents tried to advise me, but I wouldn't listen to anybody."

She left her boy friend. After three weeks, she went back to him. They got married. After a month, she left him again. "I think I married him so that I could divorce him finally. Yes, I *know* that's what it was."

Famous men became Melanie's lovers. Often they were old enough to be her father. On the advice of one of them, she blithely signed up to study acting with the venerable Stella Adler at her summer workshop in California.

Stella is the daughter of the famous Adler family of the Yiddish and English stages. Her most celebrated husband was Harold Clurman, the great director. Her most celebrated enemy was Lee Strasberg, founder of the Actors' Studio. She was an originator of the Group Theatre, which did Clifford Odets's plays in the 1930s. She studied one-on-one with Stanislavsky in Moscow.

Men *adored* Stella. She smote them with her wit and they fell at her feet for decades. She believed that there was only one theater that counted and that was "the theater of the mind." She roared at her students. "Up! Up! On your feet, darling! Shaw cannot be achieved sitting down!"

Melanie Griffith was so terrified by Stella Adler that she left her class immediately.

"I couldn't even stand on a stage, never mind being ridiculed by this *woman*! With this *blonde hair*!"

But the challenge had been accepted, the first encounter lived through. Melanie, who had already explored the life of the flesh, was ultimately destined to start exploring the life of the mind. If only she could live long enough.

"When I was twenty-two," she said. "I was hit by a car. In L.A. That's when I started taking myself seriously. I was walking across the street and I was very drunk. This drunk driver hit me. I hit the windshield and flew twenty feet around the car. I was unconscious for five hours. I fractured my arm and my leg. I realized God was trying to tell me something." (This was not to be Melanie's only brush with death. Her mother and stepfather during a journey to Africa had taken an interest in saving the big cats of the jungle, and had brought hundreds to the ranch where they lived. One day, one of them tried to take Melanie's face off. "He didn't mean it," she said quite simply of the lion.)

"After I was hit by the car, I got this movie, *She's in the Army Now*. Jamie Lee Curtis and Kathleen Quinlan and I all went through basic training together. On January 6, 1980, I met Rocky. He was playing Jamie's boyfriend in the movie. The minute I saw him, I said, 'Oh my God, that's him.' And it is. We've been together ever since then. Three years."

With Rocky in her life, she moved to New York and lived in relative poverty for a woman of her means, and studied once again with Stella Adler. "Being in front of Stella and being critiqued by her and being able to live through that, it's quite a feat. I wouldn't have been able to do it without Rocky. I would have found any reason to drop out, but I couldn't with him there." Not only was it new to be poor—she paid her tuition by transcribing Adler's notes—it was new to be rejected. As it is often said in the theater, Melanie "couldn't get arrested" in New York. She tried out for everything, landed nothing. "The great thing was that I didn't get any roles," she said, laughing.

It wasn't that the rejection was fun. It was that *surviving the rejection* was strengthening. And now she could pretend to be somebody else in a movie and exorcise the demons of her life because she had studied, she knew the technique; she was an actress.

In Spoto's book, Hitchcock was quoted in an interview he gave to a London journalist after *The Birds* appeared. "Her reactions in *The Birds* were subtle," said Hitchcock of Tippi Hedren, "and that's what pleased me about the girl. You know, she never acted before. . . . She had nothing to unlearn. . . . I controlled every movement on her face. She did purely cinematic acting of very fine shadings all the time. She wasn't allowed to do anything beyond what I gave her. It was my control entirely."

Brian sat in his large chair in his office and grinned and shook his head, the philosopher king. "Melanie will nail you in a second," he said. "She says exactly what she thinks. She can be real tough, but she's got a side where she bursts into tears and she's afraid what her mother thinks and afraid what her grandmother thinks. . . ." He sighed. "The bottom line here is that we are making a movie. And if Melanie can play a sort of sexy, ditsy broad better than anybody else, why should she stop? People want her to be Meryl Streep! She's not Meryl Streep! She's Melanie, and you have to be what you are!"

Brian let her improvise.

Brian *wanted* her to improvise.

He thought she was funny, he thought she was beautiful, he thought she was so bewitchingly vulnerable. He controlled the movie but he did not control Melanie because she had too much to offer the movie. And in the end of *Body Double* she popped out of the grave, as though she were the doll Hitchcock had given her popping out of its toy coffin, and yelled with a vengeance, "Don't touch me! Corpse-sucker! I've seen your type on those horror movies on late night TV, you're a necrophiliac! Yechhhh!

Unconscious is good but dead is better, right? Well don't you touch me! *I'm not dead yet*!''

''I'm still fighting,'' Melanie said. ''There are so many things I'm trying to figure out. I didn't give up on my mom. I couldn't just write her off. All I can do is love her. My father—I didn't speak to him for a while—but I understand him now, and I accept him. The hardest thing is to really believe in myself.''

There was a strange absence of prurience from Holly Body as a character. She got a costume that was black chaps without any behind, so that Melanie's shapely white buns with Holly's punk tattoo protruded. It was a prurient costume. But Holly Body herself was so without guile, so forthright that she bore no resemblance to any adult film star heretofore celebrated. Perhaps it was because Melanie had observed other women's careers and seen that as with most things in life the sex trip could be detoxified by comedy. But Brian said, ''It's because of Annette. There's nothing dirty about Annette. Although I would probably be one of the few people in America who would not have difficulty taking that position. But somehow, to me, she never seemed dirty.'' He leaned forward; his teeth did not show. ''Why? I don't know why. Those movies are dirty . . . I mean within certain standards, that's classified as dirt. . . . But I never got that from Annette. Never.''

It was the only time during the *Body Double* shoot that Brian De Palma looked . . . bewildered. ''Why?'' he asked.

Melanie knew why. ''I think Holly is a woman who has made a choice,'' she said. ''I told Brian I wanted Holly to be intelligent. She is flamboyant about what she does because she does it well, and that's her choice to do that. She doesn't want anybody to fuck her over. She's not stupid. She's not on drugs. She's not a whore. She's a businesswoman.''

The simulated masturbation sequences as they eventually materialized in *Body Double* were like Blackstone's magic, all trompe l'oeil—slow and sensual and strongly reminiscent of elegant fan dancing, spun off from a segment of Annette's stage act. Melanie developed the routine until it suited her body, her taste, and, most important, her interpretation of the character of Holly.

Why masturbation?

Melanie knew why. "I think most men are fascinated by women masturbating, because they are afraid they really don't know how to satisfy a woman."

"I wouldn't film an actual masturbation scene," she said. "Of course not. But if you read the script, you have a perception of the character. If you can't read the script and have an idea of the character and what she does for a living, if you can't put yourself in her place, then, of course, you don't want to go up for the part. What is the director going to do? Of course, he's going to say: 'Run your hand up your leg.' But I had a view of how that would look on camera, and I don't think those other girls who freaked out did. I mean, you can be very sexy just touching your arm. . . ."

And she does. She smiles with her mouth closed and closes her eyes and runs her fingers up her arm very sexily.

Annette recalled the origin of the sequences. "In the script initially, all Brian had was: This female goes through a ritual where she puts on jewelry and perfume and pours herself a glass of wine and turns the lights down low and puts some music on and then . . . Brian thought she should lead into it by doing exercise.

"I said, well, I don't think that exercising is very erotic.

"I don't think that many women do their aerobics and are suddenly seized by an urge to have an orgasm.

"I think generally they are seized by an urge to sit down and have a glass of water.

"So I said, look. I don't know about other females, but I would assume that it's true there are many females out there in the world who dance around the house by themselves. You put on some music and you're feeling pretty good and so you dance around. I don't know about guys, guys are probably too uptight. But girls . . . so I suggested that maybe he could lead into the sequence with an erotic dance routine. And Brian thought that was a good idea and that's what was done."

Annette had been coopted involuntarily from a candidate to the winner's coach, and, of course, there was tension between her and Melanie initially.

"When Annette flew down to work with me on the routine," Melanie recalled, "she was real cold at first and made it really hard for me to try and look good. Brian was there. We were dancing in front of the mirror and I couldn't compete. She wasn't saying anything, she was just being so good, and making it hard for me.

"But then after Brian left, we started to talk. And talk. And afterwards she said: 'You're okay. I like you. I didn't want to like you. It's just that I wanted this part and you got it and it's very hard.'

"So we became friends."

Finished.

End of story.

Onward, as Brian De Palma would say.

The sensuality of the sequence would be enhanced by Burum's lighting (the shadows massaged Melanie as tenderly as her own hands) and by Greenberg's editing (intercut with Craig Wasson's guilt-ridden face, her dance grew dangerous as well as titillating) and by Pino Donaggio's pulsing score. If, as Melanie had said, men were interested in women masturbating because they wanted

so badly to know, to be sure, that they could satisfy a woman, that they could achieve the "glow" Sam Bouchard and Jake Scully had joked about, then they would find no answers to the mystique from Holly Body.

Melanie's lovely eyes narrowed. Her face grew hard as a little white stone.

"The whole reason I wanted to do this role is because in a way, it parallels my life a lot.

"I'm okay. I'm fine. I'm intelligent.

"But I also get judged by people constantly.

"I am tired of trying to please everybody.

"So it is with Holly. Holly doesn't give a shit.

"*And that's what I want to get to in my life.*

"Women who are sexy and blonde and open about their sexuality are judged. Harshly. That's not fair.

"As an actress I can go into the homes of these people who are sitting in these small towns with their videos with something like *Body Double* and they'll say: 'She's a porn queen, but I like her. She may be in this thing you're not even supposed to talk about, but she's all right.'

"I have given Holly a very open heart.

"I have given her intelligence and I have given her self-respect.

"I like Holly. She is a good person.

"So what if she's sexy?

"Fuck everyone.

"It doesn't mean I'm dumb."

Wilford Leach said that Brian's movies were like the circling of the planets. Around and around the artist went, a lifelong 360-degree pan, and what he saw on one revolution would be better lit on the next or in total darkness the next time around. With each revolution, there was a further revelation, but the universe of Brian's material remained basically the same.

Brutality.

Sex.

Greed.

In *Body Double*, the light fell on sex.

Body Double itself would reveal nothing new to us about sex, since the power of the actress to mask her sexuality and the power of the director and the cinematographer, the editing and the music, to fool us about it governed the sexuality of the film. But the preliminary investigation that Brian did in his hours of interviews with Annette illuminated the subject as the lights of the film could not.

Were you beautiful, Annette? Beautiful as a child?

"Ah . . . I don't know. It's hard to say. I don't know. I couldn't tell. I still don't to this day. Only through the last couple of years, I've actually begun to realize . . . but I don't think . . . uh . . . most women tend to be rather insecure and not think that they're very attractive. And I spent many many years feeling like that. It's very very very weird. People will call you up and say, 'Oh God! You looked so beautiful in that picture.' And then you go see it and you think 'Oh God, I look awful.'

"People don't want to see you if you don't have a perfect body, they don't want to see reality. They can open up the door and turn on the television and turn on the radio and get it any time they want to. And it's weird in a lot of ways because it makes people feel inadequate because they aren't as beautiful as everybody is on screen.

"I'm thirty-one and I look better than I did when I was eighteen and that's the God's honest truth. And I continue to get better-looking as I get older. If you take care of yourself, you don't have to get wrinkled or out of shape. You can stay beautiful forever. I'm going to be the most beautiful eighty-year-old you ever saw in your life! My hair's gonna be white. I'm

gonna have bright blue eyes and pink cheeks. All the colors will be perfect. I will be slim and I will be absolutely darling.

"I'm going to have a child one day," she continued. "That's the one thing that worries me. I'm very concerned that it might completely wreck my body. It's not so much for the business, 'cause if I never acted again. . . . I mean, it's not gonna be a big deal one way or another because I can always produce or direct or leave my stamp on the business in other ways.

"But it really could affect my image of myself.

"And I'm afraid of that, because I want to be beautiful.

"I want to have my lovely body the way I want it, which is really unrealistic, okay? And I've kept it in this unrealistic manner for thirty-one years and I intend to keep it unrealistically like this forever, okay? Because I like it. And I wish we could get rid of the attitudes that created that. It's incredibly unfair to all those ladies out there who get told, well, your tummy's not flat enough and your breasts sag and it's awful, I mean, I can see both sides of this issue. It would be nicer if greater segments of our population would feel more comfortable with themselves. But I am afraid I am thoroughly indoctrinated into our culture's idea of what is beautiful. I mean the fact that when I take my clothes off, I look like a Barbie doll means a lot to me.

"I had a Barbie doll when I was a kid, I think this is part of me. I grew up thinking that's how women were supposed to look. So that's what my mental image was and that's how I ended up looking. My body goes in at the waist like it's supposed to. It comes out at the hips. It has long legs, it has nice breasts. Looks just like my Barbie doll when I was a kid. I mean if your mother was really obese, then maybe you think you're supposed to be obese. But my mother was always at work. I never got to see her. I saw more of my Barbie doll. I didn't relate to my mom as a female. I related to her as my mom.

"That's different, somehow, isn't it?"

* * *

No one knew more about beautiful women than Brian De Palma, right?

His women were always perfect. Perfect bodies. Simple characters. Adolescents in gym class. Unfaithful wives. Psychotic twins. Satanic mothers. Whores with hearts of gold. Geneviève Bujold in *Obsession* was restoring this painting, in this Italian church Brian remembered from his summer foray to Europe as a student, and she said to Cliff Robertson, this is the problem: Shall we restore the great painting on top or shall we scrape it away and see about the crude rough draft of another masterpiece underneath? And of course Cliff Robertson says, "Beauty should be preserved," and so do the scholars, and so does Brian, opting for the painting on top, leaving the crude, rough, potential masterpiece underneath buried in darkness.

At one time this fixation with the external woman could have been interpreted simply as an aesthetic drive, a need to worship loveliness; and a woman wanted its ennobling light trained on her, she wanted to be a sex object.

But times had changed.

It was not so ennobling to be a sex object any more.

The culture of the camera had been at work for generations, abstracting women, reducing them to their colors and their curves.

Among men, that had tended to produce a devastating myopia that could lead to heartbreak. They looked but they did not *see*, and they loved, therefore, what they did not know. Just like Jake Scully.

Among women, it had produced a terrible crisis of self-esteem, and a complex, almost mortal fear of being absolutely objectified. Am I beautiful? If I am not, am I still okay? If I am, and everybody looks at me, will anybody see me, *really see*? In the culture of the camera, what the man looks at is important above all. What the woman feels about being looked at means

much less. And she lives in danger of having her feelings ignored, her substance ignored, until she is obliterated, meaningless, powerless, fictionalized and as dead as Gloria Revelle.

So how do we beat the rap?

Some of us demonstrate against pornography.

Some of us discover our muscles, or go exploring the life of the mind, or cuddle our babies and practice marriage, and some of us try to become as rich and powerful as men, and many of us avoid movies like those made by Brian De Palma, and we live our lives and try not to pay any attention.

And a few women get right out there in the glare and let it bake them a skin as impenetrable as the porcelain finish on the doll in the toy store.

"What I found when I was working with Annette," Brian said, "was that she was playing Holly Body as Annette. She has created this thing which is Annette Haven, this persona, and I was sort of directing Annette playing this character of Annette instead of directing an actress playing a character, it was like two stages removed. So suddenly you're dealing with two levels, and when you try to get some kind of reality into a performance, suddenly this THING is in the way. It's like this ultimate shell, this this . . ." De Palma is stuttering. He can't find the words. ". . . this Barbie doll or whatever it is, and to get through to *her* . . ."

Yes, Brian, to get through to her . . . ?

". . . to get through to her is a real problem, because she's created this thing under all kinds of adverse circumstances, to deal with the world or whatever she does, that she's lost herself to some extent.

"And I was constantly trying to puncture my way through this thing, to get *through* to this girl. Because that's what an actor uses, you're trying to get to *them*. And I did manage to do it. But it took an tremendous amount of . . . time."

He is sitting in his barely furnished office. He is surrounded by piles and piles of location pictures. He does not know if he is right, and that crumples him up over his desk, a mountain of doubt.

"I could never really strip the thing away. I mean, I could, occasionally . . . some things come through, you know, in such a long period of time . . . but when I touched into it, occasionally, I hit such a pool of sorrow, such a maelstrom of anger . . . like sometimes she would talk about when she was a little girl and the little girl would come through and . . . it would be so sorrowful . . . I couldn't deal with it. . . .

"Plus Annette is so . . . so . . . so suspicious of men," he said sadly. "I don't think she trusts men. And every once in a while, you'd trip into that. . . .

"And it's so devastating. . . . I mean, once you start *seeing* . . . well, I couldn't bear it. I mean, you don't want to be in the position of exploiting . . . and I'm very vulnerable, you know. . . ."

De Palma came back to the surface, so distressed by what he had seen that he could hardly speak of it, and resumed his beautiful pan.

The vampire sank his fake fangs into the substitute flesh of the body double, and the fake blood poured down.

FILMS DIRECTED BY BRIAN DE PALMA

Year of Release	*Feature*	*Cast Included*
1968 (completed in 1963)	*The Wedding Party* (also co-writer and co-producer with Wilford Leach and Cynthia Munroe)	Jill Clayburgh, Charles Pfluger, Robert De Niro
1968	*Murder à la Mod* (also writer)	Andra Akers, Margo Norton, William Finley, Jared Martin
1968	*Greetings* (also co-writer with Charles Hirsch)	Robert De Niro, Jonathon Warden, Gerrit Graham
1970	*Dionysus in '69* (documentary film of the play by Richard Schechner; also co-producer with Robert Fiore and Bruce Rubin)	The Performance Group
1970	*Hi Mom!* (also writer)	Robert De Niro, Jennifer Salt, Gerrit Graham, Lara Parker, Charles Durning
1972	*Get To Know Your Rabbit*	Tom Smothers, John Astin, Katharine Ross, Orson Welles
1973	*Sisters* (also co-writer with Louisa Rose)	Margot Kidder, Jennifer Salt, Charles Durning, William Finley

Year of Release	*Feature*	*Cast Included*
1974	*Phantom of the Paradise* (also writer)	William Finley, Paul Williams, Jessica Harper, Gerrit Graham
1976	*Obsession* (story by De Palma and Paul Schrader)	Cliff Robertson, Geneviève Bujold, John Lithgow
1976	*Carrie*	Sissy Spacek, Piper Laurie, William Katt, John Travolta, Amy Irving, Nancy Allen
1978	*The Fury*	Kirk Douglas, Amy Irving, John Cassavetes, Carrie Snodgress, Andrew Stevens
1980	*Home Movies* (story by De Palma; also co-producer with Jack Temchin and Gil Adler)	Kirk Douglas, Nancy Allen, Keith Gordon, Gerrit Graham
1980	*Dressed To Kill* (also writer)	Michael Caine, Angie Dickinson, Nancy Allen, Keith Gordon
1981	*Blow Out* (also writer)	John Travolta, Nancy Allen, John Lithgow
1983	*Scarface*	Al Pacino, Steven Bauer, Michele Pfeiffer, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio
1984	*Body Double* (also co-writer with Robert Avrech; producer)	Craig Wasson, Melanie Griffith, Gregg Henry, Deborah Shelton

BODY DOUBLE PRODUCTION CREDITS

COLUMBIA PICTURES PRESENTS
A BRIAN DE PALMA FILM

THE CAST

Jake ..... Craig Wasson
Holly ..... Melanie Griffith
Sam ..... Gregg Henry
Gloria ..... Deborah Shelton
Jim McLean ..... Guy Boyd
Ruben ..... Dennis Franz
Drama Teacher ..... David Haskell
Kimberly ..... Rebecca Stanley
Corso ..... Al Israel
Video Salesman ..... Douglas Warhit
Douglas ..... B. J. Jones
Frank ..... Russ Marin
Billy ..... Lane Davies
Carol ..... Barbara Crampton
Assistant Director ..... Larry "Flash" Jenkins
Sid Goldberg ..... Monte Landis
Linda Shaw ..... Linda Shaw
Tina ..... Mindi Miller
Actress/Vampire Movie ..... Denise Loveday
Corso's Secretary ..... Gela Jacobson
Police Officers ..... Ray Hassett, Rick Gunderson, Jerry Brutsche
Male Porno Star ..... Michael Kearns
Cameraman ..... Rob Paulsen
Theatre Director ..... Jeremy Lawrence
TV Director ..... Rod Loomis
Auditioning Actor ..... Gary F. Griffith
Security Guard (Gloria's House) ..... Michael White
Studio Guard ..... Emmett Brown
Security Guard (Bellini's) ..... H. David Fletcher
Production Assistant ..... Marcia Del Mar

Naked Man ..... PHIL REDROW
Saleslady ..... SLAVITZA JOVAN
Jake's Replacement ..... JACK MAYHALL
Girl In Bathroom #1 ..... ALEXANDRA DAY
Girl In Bathroom #2 ..... PAMELA WESTON
Girl In Bathroom #3 ..... BRINKE STEVENS
Girl In Bathroom #4 ..... MELISSA CHRISTIAN
Girl #1 (Holly Does Hollywood) ..... PATTY LOTZ
Girl #2 (Holly Does Hollywood) ..... BARBARA PECKINPAUGH
Man #1 (Holly Does Hollywood) ..... DAVID URSIN
Man #2 (Holly Does Hollywood) ..... CASEY SANDER
Man #3 (Holly Does Hollywood) ..... WES EDWARDS
Jogger ..... CHUCK WATERS
Man With Dog ..... PAUL CALABRIA
Stunts ..... NANCI ROGERS, RICHARD WARLOCK, JERRY WILLS, TED GROSSMAN

THE PRODUCTION TEAM

Director ..... BRIAN DE PALMA
Producer ..... BRIAN DE PALMA
Story By ..... BRIAN DE PALMA
Screenplay By ..... ROBERT J. AVRECH AND BRIAN DE PALMA
Director of Photography ..... STEPHEN H. BURUM, A.S.C.
Production Designer ..... IDA RANDOM
Executive Producer ..... HOWARD GOTTFRIED
Edited By ..... GERALD GREENBERG, BILL PANKOW
Music ..... PINO DONAGGIO
Music Conducted By ..... NATALE MASSARA
Costume Designer ..... GLORIA GRESHAM
Casting ..... JANET HIRSHENSON, C.S.A., and JANE JENKINS, C.S.A.
Production Manager ..... RAY HARTWICK
First Assistant Director ..... JOE NAPOLITANO
Second Assistant Director ..... ROBERT YANNETTI
Camera Operator ..... DOUG RYAN
First Assistant Camera ..... DUSTY BLAUVELT
Second Assistant Camera ..... MICHAEL RIBA
Sound Mixer ..... JAMES TANENBAUM
Boom Operator ..... RIMAS TUMASONIS
Script Supervisor ..... WILMA GARSCADDEN-GAHRET
Set Decorator ..... CLOUDIA

Set Designers ..... Bill Elliott, Charles Butcher
Supervising Sound Editor ..... Steve Flick
Sound Editors ..... John Arrufat, John C.C. Dunn, David Whittaker, Linda Whittlesey
ADR Editors ..... Steven Purvis, Avram D. Gold
Assistant Sound Editors ..... Destiny Borden, John Hoeren
Sound Effects Recordist ..... D. M. Hemphill
Foley by ..... John Roesch, Joan Rowe
Foley recorded by ..... T. E. Sadler at TAJ
Assistant Editor ..... Kristina Boden
Apprentice Editors ..... Tara Timpone, Etter D'Orazio
Supervising Music Editor ..... Richard Stone/Seque Music
Re-Recording Mixers ..... Les Fresholtz, Vern Poore
Effects Mixer ..... Dick Alexander
Production Associate ..... Jimsie Eason
Hairstylist ..... Marlene Williams
Make-up Artist ..... Barbara Guedel
Women's Wardrobe Supervisor ..... Francine Jamison
Men's Wardrobe Supervisor ..... Jim Tyson
Assistants to Mr. De Palma ..... Camilla Turnbull, Tani Cohen
Location Managers ..... Frank W. Pierson, Eric Schwab
Production Coordinator ..... Shari Leibowitz
Production Auditor ..... Margaret Mitchell
Gaffer ..... Tim Griffith
Best Boy ..... Pete Portizo
Rigging Gaffer ..... Joel Stout
Key Grip ..... Emmett Brown
Best Boys ..... John Englert, Bob Ivenor
Dolly Grip ..... Bob Gaynor
Property Master ..... Horst Grandt
Assistant Property Master ..... David Aaron
Leadman ..... Daril Alder
Cableman ..... Mike Seeman
Construction Coordinator ..... Lynn Price
Standby Painter ..... Kirk Hansen
Paint Foreman ..... Ed Freeman
Carpenter Foreman ..... Scott Goodale
Still Photographer ..... Ralph Nelson
Casting Associates ..... Michael Hirshenson, Elizabeth Leustig
Extra Casting ..... Rich-Mar Casting
Unit Publicist ..... Rob Harris
DGA Trainees ..... Margaret Nelson, Carey Dietrich

Production Assistants ..... WILLIAM ROSENFIELD, KELLIANN LADD, LISA HORWITCH
Transportation Coordinator ..... DAN ANGLIN
Stunt Coordinator ..... JERRY BRUTSCHE
Animal Handler ..... KARL MILLER
Process Photography ..... BILL HANSARD
Craft Service ..... MARY REAM
Trainers ..... BODY BY JAKE, JACKSON SOUSA
Special Effects Makeup ..... TOM BURMAN, BARI DREIBAND
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Susan Dworkin's most recent work before *Double De Palma* was the highly acclaimed *Making Tootsie: A Film Study with Dustin Hoffman and Sydney Pollack,* published by Newmarket Press in 1983.

She received the coveted Peabody Award for excellence in broadcasting for writing *She's Nobody's Baby,* a Home Box Office/Ms. Foundation for Education and Communication documentary about American women in the twentieth century, which starred Marlo Thomas and Alan Alda. Her book based on that program appeared in 1983.

With Dr. Cynthia W. Cooke, she wrote *The Ms. Guide to a Woman's Health,* which received an American Book Award nomination. As a contributing editor and regular film critic at *Ms.* magazine, and frequent contributor to other national publications, she has interviewed many people in show business, including Stella Adler, Meryl Streep, Jane Alexander, Carol Burnett, Robert Benton, James Brooks, and Marlo Thomas. She has worked closely with Ms. Thomas for several years, both on television projects and on the McCall Life Pattern Fund to support continuing education for women. She has also worked as head of the Writing Unit of the Office of Policy Research at New York's Department of Social Services and as a speech writer for the Commissioner of Welfare.

Ms. Dworkin's work in the theatre has received considerable attention. The New York *Times* called her play *Deli's Fable* "an authentic work of the imagination . . . a triumph." Other plays produced in New York include *The Ghost Convention, The Public Good,* and *The Forgotten Lover.* Ms Dworkin lives in Bergenfield, New Jersey.

ALSO BY SUSAN DWORKIN

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—Brian De Palma, from the book *Double De Palma*

DOUBLE DE PALMA

SUSAN DWORKIN

Illustrated with photographs

In his disturbing, emotionally charged films, Brian De Palma has perfected one of the great visual styles and focused on the prevalence of violence, eroticism, and the abuse of power in today's society. Now Susan Dworkin captures this controversial filmmaker in the act of making *Body Double,* a Columbia Pictures release that has been called the ultimate De Palma suspense thriller. Dworkin, whose book *Making Tootsie* was acclaimed by critic Digby Diehl "an important study in a class with Lillian Ross's *Picture* and John Gregory Dunne's *The Studio,*" is the first writer ever allowed access throughout the shooting and editing of a De Palma film. She conducted extensive interviews with members of the cast and crew; with executive producer Howard Gottfried (producer of *Hospital, Network,* and *Altered States*); with theatre director Wilford Leach, De Palma's most influential teacher; with adult film star Annette Haven, occasional adviser to De Palma on *Body Double*; and with De Palma himself. She provides unique insight into De Palma's casting and story choices; the script rewrites; production design, cinematography, and improvisations on the shoot; and decisions made in the editing room. In *Double De Palma,* Dworkin has produced an illuminating study of moviemaking that is also a skillful portrait of the glare and glitter that characterize Hollywood today.

SUSAN DWORKIN is a playwright, a Peabody award-winning television writer, and a *Ms.* Magazine contributing editor. Her 1983 film study, *Making Tootsie,* received rave reviews calling it "superb...worth a semester of film school" (David Brown, producer of *Jaws* and *The Verdict*); "a solid piece of journalism, compact and lean" (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*); "a *must* for all film buffs" (Patricia Bosworth); and "a perceptive and provocative work" (*Los Angeles Times*).

Cover photograph of Brian De Palma on the set of *Body Double* by Ralph Nelson

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